

CHATTERBOX.



1885

BOSTON: ESTES & LAURIAT, 301 WASHINGTON STREET.



CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

Chatterbox

EDITED BY JERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.



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Chatterbox.



Villagers talking over the return of the Flowers.



GILLY FLOWER.

CHAPTER I.

MR. FLOWER used to say that he really had two little daughters, though the world only gave him credit for one, for Jill in the holidays was altogether a different person from Jill when the boys were all away at school. The first was a Jill who came pelting downstairs two or three steps at a stride, or, as often as not, sliding down the broad oak banisters with Jack's Tam-o'-shanter very much on the back of her head, with a whistle as shrill and clear as a London street boy's on her lips, and with a fishing-rod or cricket-bat in her sunburnt little hands. The other was a quiet little maiden, who appeared suddenly on the scene with rather red eyes when the inevitable day came that carried off Martin, Jack, and Davy, to the various schools they adorned, and the old house went back to its echoing stillness and formal tidiness.

This little Jill steps about very softly, and does lessons with Miss Bridgeman, and goes for sedate walks with that lady on the turnpike-road, and wears gloves, and looks as if climbing a tree, or wading a stream, or making half-a-dozen runs off her own bat at cricket, were unheard-of accomplishments in a young lady. She sits for hours, too, coiled up on the window-seat in the schoolroom, with books selected at her own sweet will from the well-furnished shelves downstairs, the choice of which occasionally makes Miss Bridgeman shudder, and, great as her respect for Mr. Flower is, doubt if it is quite safe to turn a child loose into such an extensive and unweeded library: but it was Mr. Flower's principle that she would get no more harm than the bees, who draw the sweetest honey from the poisonous flowers.

Her real name was Beatrice, and Beatrice Miss Bridgeman always called her; but to all the rest of the world, the little world of home, she was Jill, having earned the name from her earliest babyhood by her devotion to Jack, to whom she was a slave, or a shadow, or part of himself. There was not the faintest doubt that if this Jack had fallen down the hill and broken his crown, and such a curly mop of a crown it was too, this Jill would certainly have come tumbling after; only Mr. Flower used to say that, in this case, Jack would never have taken the trouble to go up the hill, but would have sent Jill labouring up to fetch the pail of water, while he sat and whistled on the stile at the bottom.

So Jill was generally accepted as her name, and if you had come to the house and asked for Miss Beatrice, Mary Jane would have stared and not understood whom you meant. The only other name she was ever called was Gilly Flower, father's name for her when she was no longer merely the complement to Jack; and the name was taken up by the boys sometimes when they wanted to be especially coaxing and to come round her in some way.

During the holidays there was plenty of life stir about Bengrove, but when the boys were gone and Mr. Flower and Jill left to themselves, it was a dull, still life for the child, as her father often thought with a sharper pang of the ever-aching regret for the young wife who had left her baby-daughter motherless when she was but a week old.

But Jill seemed quite happy and contented, and not to have any wish to seek for society or amusement beyond the garden walls of Bengrove: and, indeed, there were no girls she could consort with within easy reach without dipping into the tradesmen's families at Shettle, for which Jill did not seem any more inclined than she did for soaring into the society of the young Ladies Milton at the Chase, or the Honourable Miss Collets, the member's daughters at Hill Park, who, before the general election, manifested a great desire to cultivate Jill's acquaintance, and invited her up to the Park.

She went most unwillingly, and only at her father's express wish, and must have made herself very disagreeable as the invitation was never repeated.

The boys used to tease Jill about her friends at the Park, and Jill would get very angry, and declare that the Miss Collets might be honourable, but they were also vulgar and ignorant, and that she never wished to see them again. And then the boys would change their tactics, and declare that, if only Jill had played her cards better, they would all have been invited up there in the holidays to play tennis, and have as much rabbit-shooting as they liked, and make Jill feel that she had ruined the prospects of the family by her surly manners.

'Can't you fancy how she looked,' Jack would say, 'with her mouth shut up like a trap, and a fight-you-for-twopence expression if any one spoke to her?'

'And are you quite sure, on your word of honour,' said Davy, 'that you did not mistake the butler for Mr. Collet, and shake hands with him when he opened the door?'

'And, O Jill, for the honour of the family, don't tell us you kissed the footman!' added Jack.

'And her behaviour at lunch!' groaned Martin, in pretended despair. 'Oh, my gracious! if she had only let us know beforehand, we would have saved up our money and bought a manual of etiquette for her! And now I suppose the Collets will think we are all a set of savages, who put our elbows on the table and our knives in our mouths, and drink out of the finger-glasses!'

'Oh, Martin, how can you!' protested poor little Jill, scarlet and almost crying, though, you may be sure, with three schoolboy brothers, teasing was nothing new to her.

Bengrove stood about half a mile out of Shettle, and with its high, moss-grown walls, and heavy iron gates, looked as reserved and proud as its owner was, in the opinion of the Shettle people; and the stone dragon on either side of the gate frowned down on the passers-by with a most forbidding aspect. To be sure the effect was somewhat spoiled by the appearance of three—I am sorry to say four—peashooters over the wall, and four faces behind them ready to open fire on any unfortunate wayfarer who chanced to come by, and by those forbidding dragons being supplied with long pipes and large paper nigs

caps; but this was an only very occasional interruption of the dignified dullness, and, for the most part, the grey walls shut in out of sight whatever might be passing within.

Bengrove had been the dower-house of the Flower family in old days, and was a comfortable, square, old-fashioned house, with large windows and window-seats, a roomy porch and oak-wainscots to the rooms, and high chimney-pieces, and big open chimneys. There was a good bit of garden round it, and some fine old trees, and altogether it might have been a nice place if any one would have laid out a little money on it; but this was just what Mr. Flower refused to do.

Nothing had been done to the old house since Mr. Flower came, eight years before, with three little round-eyed boys in deep mourning, and a baby-girl, and an old nurse.

When it was first rumoured in Shettle and its neighbourhood that some of the Flowers were coming back to live at Bengrove there was a general rejoicing; for the Flowers had owned half the county at one time, and had been great people in those parts, as may be seen by the tablets, old tombs, and hatchments in Shettle Church, going back through many generations to the cross-legged Crusader with a broken nose in the chapel.

They had lived at Hill Park and had been generous, open-handed, easy-going people, living always a little beyond their means, so that each generation was a little more behindhand and hampered with debt than the last; until at length a more than usually extravagant Flower in the last generation had brought things to a climax, and what was left of the estate was sold, and the beautiful old house and park passed into other hands, and the Flowers disappeared from the home of their ancestors. Only the dower-house remained in their possession, and after the lapse of some years, when the tenant to whom it had been let died, people were much surprised to hear that Martin Flower, one of the younger sons, and his family, were coming to live there, and they hailed his coming as the beginning of the return of the good old times when 'the king shall enjoy his own again;' for though the Collets were very well liked, and were rich and hospitable, no one could feel that Hill Park really belonged to them, even after twenty years' tenure, while the old tombs told of the old family, and the Flower dragons frowned and pranced on the gates, and the Flower ghost haunted the moonlit avenue, indifferent to newcomers.

But Martin Flower proved a great disappointment; the loss of his young wife had quite crushed him, money troubles had worried and hampered him, he was broken in health and spirits, and he shut himself up at Bengrove, leading a half-invalid, half-student life, and practising the most rigid economy in order to give the boys a good education. He kept no horses in the roomy stables and only one decrepit old man in the garden, who did less and less every year, and almost gave up the hopeless struggle with the weeds that soon overran the borders, and the creepers that grew in wild, undisciplined luxuriance, and the shrubs that encroached on the paths and jostled one another and the passers-by.

People who remembered the place in old Mrs. Powell's time, the late tenant, lamented over the change, and said, 'What a pity it was to let it run wild, and turn into a perfect wilderness!' But for the children it was delightful, far more so than any trimly-kept garden with velvet lawns and ribbon borders. The boys now and then regretted there was not a better tennis-court, for it required great skill and ingenuity and a special set of rules to play on the rough, uneven lawn, broken up with overgrown shrubs, and with thick bushes and ivy and undergrowth in all directions, to swallow up balls and hide them for hours, and days, and weeks.

But that was the only disadvantage. It was lovely in its wild way, with its great rose-bushes and patches of self-sown annuals and straggling honeysuckle and clematis. It was a grand place for birds, and there were nests in spring by the dozen whose welfare Jill superintended. You could not do any mischief there, try your hardest; and are there in all creation any more mischievous creatures than school-boys? They might dig in any part of the garden with impunity, plant mustard and cress or turnips in the parts more usually reserved for flowers, keep their rabbit-hutch on the front lawn, construct tramways along the drives, build, cut down, and root up, pretty much as their fancy led them.

Indoors there was not so much license allowed, as the old nurse who had come with them to Bengrove, and who had nursed them all as babies, ruled despotically there over all the household, including Mr. Flower and Mary Jane the housemaid; having constant skirmishes with Miss Bridgeman, the daily governess, who sometimes disputed her authority, and whom she regarded with the suspicion and distrust old servants are apt to feel for governesses.

I think she rejoiced as much as Jill did when the holidays began, and nearly as much because then Miss Bridgeman ceased to come punctually at ten o'clock with her little bag on her arm as because 'those three blessed boys came storming in, making enough noise to deafen any one, and bringing more dirt into the house in half an hour than other folk did in a twelvemonth.'

(To be continued.)

A DOCTOR WANTED.

IN a recently published book of travels it is stated that the author and his party met one day a party of Dutchmen, returning from elephant-hunting, towards Capetown, South Africa. In their company was an Englishman ill of the fever, who had been doctored by his friends after their usual custom, which seems to have been to try medicine after medicine from their chest until the person recovered or died.

At last, their supply being exhausted, they had given him doses of tar mixed with water, and the fat of the game they killed. In order to bring on perspiration, they had even rolled him in the burning sand!

But the man did not die after all, although his recovery must have been in spite of, rather than in consequence of, this treatment.

A. R. B.



AN UNKIND BROTHER.

I SHALL not let you have my book,
 So go, and nurse your stupid doll;
 And leave my things alone, I say;
 I will not have them touched at all.

Your doll is broken? serve you right;
 Why did you leave it on the grass?
 Of course I crushed it with my foot,
 It lay just where I wished to pass.

Now, please to stop your stupid tears,
 And mind you, what I've got to say,
 That if you touch a thing of mine
 I'll throw your other toys away.'

Oh, Edward! rude, unmanly boy,
 To give your little sister pain,
 Although she loves you with her heart
 And never answers back again. D. B.



Ship on Fire.

'THE SHIP'S ON FIRE!'



It was on the 24th August, 1848, that the good ship *Ocean Monarch* set sail from Liverpool. Her decks were crowded with emigrants, many of whom were hoping to begin a new and happier life in America. Although the journey then took a longer time than in these days of very swift steamers, they still hoped to be at Boston, their port, before September was far advanced. Of the four hundred souls on board nearly all were emigrants, many of whom had never beheld the sea until a day or two before they set sail.

The voyage was soon over. The *Ocean Monarch* was still no more than six miles from the English shore, off Great Orme's Head, on the Lancashire coast, when the cry, 'The ship's on fire!' was raised. It was soon seen that all hopes of saving the vessel must be given up, and attention was directed towards saving the lives of her passengers.

Happily for them, a Brazilian man-of-war happened to be passing that way upon its trial trip, and a gentleman's yacht also came to their aid. But, notwithstanding all that could be done, the *Ocean Monarch* was burned to the water's edge in a few hours, and one hundred and seventy-eight of her crew and passengers perished.

Equally dreadful was the fate of the *Hibernia*, which caught fire in mid ocean in the year 1833, and one hundred and fifty people out of the two hundred and thirty-two on board perished.

When the good ship *Independence* went ashore, and afterwards caught fire, on the coast of Lower California, in 1853, nearly the same number of lives were lost. The few survivors who got to land underwent the most dreadful sufferings on a barren shore.

Yet amongst these sad histories there are some records of coolness and courage. In August, 1857, the *Sarah Sands*, a large screw steamer, sailed from Portsmouth for Calcutta, with three hundred soldiers on board and a quantity of government stores. On November 11 the cargo caught fire. Instead of giving themselves up to despair at the thought that the gunpowder might at any moment explode, seamen and soldiers worked heartily together. Although one barrel of powder blew up, yet the flames were at last got under, and through a heavy gale the ship struggled on to the Mauritius, where it arrived on November 21, without a single life having been lost.

A. R. B.

MILK AND HONEY.

It is always dangerous to translate the metaphors of one language literally into another. The missionaries have found this to be the case in Japan, for in speaking to the people about 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' they found this pictured to their minds—a land whose rivers flowed with something like rhubarb and senna!

ON BOARD THE 'THREE BELLS.'



THE steamer-bell clanged loudly, and the passengers began at once to bid farewell to those whom they were leaving behind. It was a strange scene; many hundred emigrants were on board bound for America, the land of hope and happiness. They were leaving old Scotland behind them for ever—the dear old home where they had lived, and worked, and suffered, and starved with patience and fortitude for many a year, and now they were going away; and though they could not wish to remain, still, it was hard to go. As they grasped for the last time the hand of friends with whom they were parting, they looked into each other's eyes with a yearning expression which seemed to say, 'Shall we ever meet again in the dim future that lies before us; or must we wait till we have reached the eternal shores?' Ah! those partings, how they seem to tear our hearts asunder!

Soon all was hurry and cheerful confusion; the partings were over, the mighty ship was cleaving her way down the river to the sea, leaving dim, smoky Glasgow far in the rear. Women had dried their eyes, and were busily attending to the wants of their little ones; while the men, gathered together in groups on the decks, were earnestly discussing with each other their prospects in the Far West.

The few cabin passengers on board were slowly threading their way among the poorer folk, and taking note of all the arrangements of the ship.

Presently the Captain came bustling along, hearty and hopeful. 'We shall have a grand passage,' he said; 'the wind is in the right quarter; the ladies will be as comfortable as if they were in their own drawing-rooms.'

'How many passengers have you on board, Captain?' asked a quiet, elderly gentleman, who had often crossed the Atlantic before.

'All told, we have eleven hundred and fifty souls on board. A goodly number, is it not?' replied the Captain; 'and where will you see a tidier, better-looking lot of emigrants? But I must be off, this is my busy time;' and away went the honest, kind-hearted seaman, whose whole heart was in his profession.

Eleven hundred and fifty souls on board, did the Captain say? Ah! there were eleven hundred and fifty-two, though the Captain did not know it. And who were the other two? Away down in the lower part of the vessel, in the dark and dismal hold, there were two little boys, hidden behind the barrels and huge packages that were piled there from floor to ceiling. Two starving city boys, who had neither friends nor home; who had nothing in this world except each other's love—and how they did love each other!

Ben, the eldest, was about fourteen, thin, dark-eyed, and tall for his age; while Geordie, his brother, was a fair-haired little fellow, nearly four years younger, gentle and quiet—indeed, more like a girl than a boy, though he had lived ever since he could remember mostly in the rough and noisy streets.

Ben was an unselfish lad, energetic and with good abilities; and upon this little brother he lavished all the strongest affection of his strong nature. There was nothing he would not do for Geordie; he had cared for him and protected him since that dreadful night when their drunken father had driven them with blows and curses from his door. And, alas! for the little lads, they had no mother! Geordie could not remember her at all; and even Ben could only faintly recall the face of a gentle woman who had crept upstairs weeping to his room one night, and, putting her arms round his neck, had prayed God to keep and bless her little lads.

Many a night had they slept down about the wharves, just wherever they could find a sheltered corner; their food, anything they could pick up about the shipping—decayed apples, carrots, beans, &c.: sometimes they would earn a few pence by running errands, and in this manner soul and body were kept together.

It had been good for Ben that he had the care of this younger brother; it had developed all the better qualities of his nature, and it had kept him from the evil and the danger of a street life.

But it was cruel work for two little fellows to live as they did; and before another winter came, Ben felt that this kind of life (for Geordie at least) must come to an end. The little fellow's cough had been a great anxiety to him for the last few months; and one day, while wandering about among the shipping, he suddenly made up his mind to try to escape from starvation and misery by getting on board some vessel bound for New York as a stow-away, he and his brother together, and take their chance in a foreign land.

His first thought was to gather together some provisions sufficient to last them throughout the voyage; and having earned a few pence, he laid them out in biscuits, cheese, and apples, living in the meantime on so very little himself, that the poor boy's strength visibly declined; and when at length they had, after much anxious watching, managed to get on board the *Three Bells*, Ben sank down behind a barrel, silent, breathless, and faint. A mouthful of water roused him again, but of the water he knew he must be very careful indeed—he had two large bottles full, but that was all.

But who can describe the feelings of the little fellows when they knew, by the motion of the vessel, that they had actually left the shore, and were on the deep, deep sea? A mingled sensation of fear and hope filled their hearts; yet hope was strongest—bright, blessed hope, which seldom deserts the very young, however desperate their position and prospects may be.

'Have a biscuit, Geordie boy?' said Ben, groping about in the dark, and drawing his little brother nearer to him; 'have a biscuit, and half an apple? Will that be enough, Geordie? you'll get more to-morrow, you know.'

'Oh, yes, Ben; but isn't it awful cold and dark down here? will it be always as dark as this do you think?'

'No, no,' said Ben: 'it must be near midnight just now; wait till the morning, we will have some light then.'

But when the morning came, it was only a feeble ray that penetrated into that dismal place, and weary, weary was the first night and day spent by the two captives in their self-chosen dungeon.

We need not go over in detail all the sufferings and anxieties of the next few days. Their life was more trying than Ben had expected, and even he grew daunted at last, more especially as their supply of water failed them entirely about the sixth day. But if Ben's courage had failed, what shall we say of little Geordie? Weak and delicate to begin with, his sufferings from cold and thirst had been terrible; he was not hungry, and could neither eat the cheese nor the biscuits which poor Ben so anxiously recommended.

'A drink of water, please; oh, Ben, just a wee drop more!' was all his cry. 'Keep you all the biscuits, Ben, I canna eat them,' so the little fellow said.

After the second day their terror was extreme to find themselves attacked by a large rat, which, in spite of all Ben's courage and determination, would hardly retire from them. Poor Geordie was in an agony of fear; he clung to his brother with cries and sobs, till Ben whispered that they must keep quiet or they would be found out. 'And oh, Geordie, I don't know what they might do to us if they found us here!'

'Would they thrash us, Ben, think ye?' said the poor little boy; 'they would never drown us, Ben?'

'Stuff! nonsense!' said Ben, stoutly; 'never you fear, Geordie. Come, boy, fall asleep, I'll keep you as warm as I can;' and Geordie sobbed himself to sleep on his brother's bosom.

Meanwhile Ben sat stiff with cold, starving with hunger and thirst, trying to make up his mind what to do.

About half the voyage was over, as nearly as he could guess, and how they had suffered! He did not much care for his own part of it, but tears filled his eyes as he thought of his dear little brother. 'Oh, if Geordie could only hold out for another week or so! but if he did not eat, he would grow so weak that when they reached New York he would be fit for nothing.'

The boy's eyes were hot and burning, while his teeth chattered with cold, and his head seemed to be reeling round; with an effort he recalled his wandering faculties, and again began to think, think, think.

Twice since their voyage had commenced a sailor had come down into the hold with a lamp in his hand, and had carried some goods up to the deck. Ben's great anxiety on these occasions had been to keep perfect silence and so escape observation; but now, oh! if that sailor would only come down once more, he would show himself at once, and appeal for mercy and help to his little brother. But suppose the sailor did not come down again? they would die of thirst unless they could make themselves heard; and oh! poor dear little Geordie, what a terrible death that would be for him! He drew the thin form still closer to his heart, and fondly kissed the hair of the sleeping boy.

(Concluded in our next.)



Hidden in the Ship's Hold.



Jack running "full tilt" into the "old governor."

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 3.)

CHAPTER II.



It was one of those supreme moments, when Miss Bridgeman was saying 'Good-bye' before the Midsummer holidays—a moment that is looked forward to through many a weary French verb and long-division sum, and perhaps as often by the teacher as the taught; but Miss Bridgeman is a conscientious little woman, and will not hasten that longed-for moment by any of the short cuts that to pupils seem so evident and desirable.

I am afraid that Jill's attention wandered considerably during Miss Bridgeman's kind suggestions about holiday reading and practising. She was in the transition state from Gilly Flower to Jack and Jill; and Miss Bridgeman had already been obliged to reprove her twice for whistling over her dictation. She was calculating what time she must start to meet the train, and she could also smell that nurse was making a cake in honour of the occasion, though she had solemnly declared that she should not have time; and Jill was anxious to go and see if the sort that Jack preferred was being made, or if, as usual, Davy had been favoured, who had always been specially dear to nurse since he nearly died of croup, and had been ailing and troublesome all one winter, causing her sleepless nights and anxious days, which is the surest way of winning a nurse's heart.

Miss Bridgeman's leave-taking seemed unusually lengthy that day; and Jill had a wicked impulse to cut it short by saying that she thought father was wanting her, only she knew he was not. But at last she was safely out of the door, and Jill was executing a little *pas seul* of delight and relief, when back she came again just to tell a small piece of news, that, as Jill said, 'No one cared twopence to hear—just like her!' and that was, that the Collets were not coming back to Hill Park, but had let it for three years, and that a lot of workmen were busy there getting it into readiness for the new family to come in as soon as possible.

Jill tried to look interested in this fact, and to conceal that she had tossed the French dictionary across the room, and that it had come out of its cover in the transit; but Miss Bridgeman saw the catastrophe, and delayed her departure yet further to pick up the injured treasure, and deliver a little homily on the duty of carefulness and neatness.

As for the new inmates of Hill Park, Jill forgot all about them directly, and thought no more of them till she was at the station, overwhelmed with portmanteaus, and carpet-bags, and cricket-bats, racquets, brown-paper parcels, a cage with a ferret in it, a bag of Banbury cakes, a straw hat, a fox's brush, and sundry other luggage, all of which she was asked to 'lay hold of for a couple of minutes,' while Jack and Davy searched for other articles left behind or lost on the way, and for those troublesome necessities of railway travelling, tickets.

Martin was at Radbourne, which does not break

up for another week—with that horrid want of consideration so common in public schools; so the other two boys got the start of him in the holidays, and, as Martin complained, got through half the fun before he came. But at the end of the holidays the tables were turned, and he was able to crow over them as he saw them off to school, and turned back himself for another week's holiday, though, between you and me, that week was rather a dull one.

Jill's attention was fully occupied in offering the ferret a little refreshment in the shape of Banbury cake, and in preventing excited passengers from laying claim to any of the nondescript heap belonging to the boys, so she was taken unawares by a sudden nudge from Davy, which caused the ferret to bite her, and the dozen things under her arm to fall to the ground; and in response to Davy's excited whisper, 'That's him!' she only gazed vaguely up and down and after the departing train, while she sucked her bitten finger.

'No, just behind you; that's him.'

'Who?'

'Why! don't you know Hill Park is let, and the governor of one of our fellows has taken it, and the whole boiling of them have come by this train? Such a turn-out you never saw; a black servant and a parrot, and the old fellow with no end of waistcoat and red nose; and Midas himself—such a jolly swell, with dogskins and a gun-case.'

'What an odd name—Midas!'

'Oh, bless you! that's only what he's called at Shirley, because he's got such jolly big ears.'

'Did you travel in the same carriage with them?'

'I should rather think not! They were all first, specially retained saloon, and all the rest of it. And oh, I say, Jill, we had such a lark! we stuck up "specially retained" in our carriage, and Jack laid down on the seat and pretended to be shocking bad, and when any one came to the door I pulled a long face and asked if they were afraid of smallpox: but the guard turned cantankerous and took off the paper, and, to pay us out, carted every cross-grained old woman he could lay hands on into our carriage, worse luck to him!'

'We kept out of sight of Midas's people,' went on Jack, 'as they were such swells, and at Swindon I was just dodging round the corner to be out of the way of them, when I ran full tilt into the old governor, and gave him such a prod in the waistcoat with the end of my bat as pretty near doubled him up, and let out such a volley of strong language as made him at least two inches less in the waist—upon my word it did, Jill; so don't look as if you didn't believe it. Now, Jill, look alive. Is that old sinner Christy coming to fetch our traps, or is there a coach-and-four waiting for us, or are we to carry them ourselves?'

'Well,' said Jill, doubtfully, 'Christy said if he had done the job he was about, and if his rheumatism was better, and if —'

'That's quite sufficient,' said Jack; 'the dear old man! he's always taken worse when we are coming home; but we shall be able to soothe his sufferings,—see if we don't. Now then, shoulder arms, quick march. Jill, you little stupid! let that box alone. We all know you're a Hercules, but even you can't

tackle more than two portmanteaus. Davy, you lazy beggar! lend a hand.'

Laden as they were, the boys debated seriously if they would not go round by way of Hill Park to have a glimpse of what might be going on there; though what they expected to be going on there when the family had only just arrived was not very evident. But Jill was strongly of opinion that home and tea, and that cake we have mentioned, were more attractive than Hill Park and two additional miles of dusty road.

'Besides,' Jill said, 'father is coming to meet us.'

And sure enough, as she said the words, the boys' eyes caught sight of the tall bent figure coming slowly along under the elms which shade the road to Bengrove, and in a moment they were both off, recklessly casting away everything they carried in the effort to be first to reach him, while poor little Jill patiently collected their scattered goods and came tottling along with as many as she could carry.

'I say,' Davy said to Jack that night, after they were in bed and the light out, and with an odd sort of effort and choke in his voice; 'I say, I don't think the old governor was quite so thin and white, don't you know, when we were at home at Easter; and he didn't seem to get so tired and walk so slow quite then, did he?'

'Yes, he did,' said Jack, sitting up in bed and flinging the clothes off him as if he were flinging something from his mind which was quite intolerable, and not to be endured for a moment. 'He's looking a lot better and stronger than he did then. Of course, it was hot to-day, and that road is dusty and enough to knock any one up. Why, I felt quite seedy myself when I first got in.'

'Ah!' said Davy, a little doubtfully, remembering the large tea Jack had made.

'It's not that at all,' went on Jack, eagerly; 'it's because one forgets, don't you know, when one's been away, just how he always is. It's not that he's worse; oh, not a bit worse—a lot better!' said Jack, very decidedly, and then lay down and covered up his head, and cried himself to sleep, which seemed strange if he was so firmly convinced, as he pretended to be to Davy.

But these confidences were kept till bed-time; and through the evening no one would have guessed that there was the faintest misgiving or anxiety lurking in the boys' hearts, or that they noticed that Mr. Flower could not keep up with their eager young footsteps, or that he fell into moody, thoughtful silence, as they chattered of school-doing and their prospects for next term, and left them before they were half through tea to sit back in his arm-chair in the window, leaning back wearily and closing his eyes, as if the very sound of their voices was too much for him.

Nor did it really escape their attention that Jill had picked up certain little tender ways that were decidedly something new—new, at any rate, in the holidays, when she seemed to have no thought for any one but the boys, with a special concentration on Jack. But now she kept them all waiting for tea, while she fidgeted with the blind to keep the sun out of father's eyes, and did not join in the rush out into the garden when tea was over, though by

staying behind she lost the pleasure of displaying some improvements she had made in the rabbit-hutches and the troop of Bantam chickens, which she had kept a profound secret with the view to surprising the boys.

'Why, Jill!' father said, opening his eyes, in the silence that followed the boys' exit; 'why, Gilly Flower, it's time for you to vanish into space and the other little Jill to appear on the scene. It's holiday-time, and Jack will want his Jill. There, don't you hear?' for, even as he spoke, loud calls from the garden came to their ears: 'Jill! I say! where are you?'

'Daddy!' said Jill, holding one of his long, thin hands in both her little brown ones, and tracing the blue veins that showed so plainly on them; 'I think that other Jill was a horrid great Tomboy, very selfish and horrid altogether; and I think she's quite gone away, and will never come back again. And now I'm going to take your chair out under the tree and read to you; and, oh dear!' said Jill, 'I wish those boys would be quiet; they are so tiresome!'

Mr. Flower was silent for a minute.

'Do you know, Gilly Flower, I rather liked that Tomboy Jill, who came in the holidays? I don't think she was so selfish as you make her out. I am sure the boys did not think her so, and that the holidays will seem dull to them if they don't get a sight of her sometimes. So don't you think she could come now and then without driving away Gilly Flower altogether? To-night, for example, when Gilly Flower has taken out my chair under the tree, and brought me the newspaper, I should like to see the other Jill running about with the boys, and making the dull old place pleasant to them.'

But Jill looked very doubtful as to the possibility of combining two such opposite characters; and I think she would scarcely have agreed to the attempt but for a more than usually impatient shout from Jack; and even then she came back, after settling Mr. Flower's chair and books quite to her satisfaction, to say,—

'Daddy, Gilly Flower is never going quite away again; she will always be within hearing, and will come in a moment if you want her, so you have only to call for her and she's sure to come.'

(To be continued.)

SOME ITALIAN PROVERBS.

THE following Proverbs, current in Italy, express the same truths as some familiar to ourselves:—

One blow does not fell a tree.

Give a clown a finger, he'll grasp your fist.

The shirt is nearer than the doublet.

Never heed the colour of a gift-horse.

Even woods have ears.

Every saint has his festival.

On a fool's beard the barber learns to shave.

Every one thinks his own crop the heaviest.

The friendship of the great is fraternity with lions.

Rather have a little one for your friend than a great one for your enemy.

A. R. B.



A WINTER DAY.

MOTHER, how I love to go
Stamping through the powdery snow;
Catching white flakes as they fall,
Rolling up a good big ball!

I pity children far away
Who never have a frosty day;
How they would like to see the sight
Of streets and squares all glittering white!

Says mother, 'Stay a moment, dear;
The boy who swept the crossing here
Is lying sick upon his bed,
His sister does the work instead.

Poor girl! her joys are very few,
Her food is poor, her clothing too.
We'll give her, ere we turn away,
A penny on this frosty day.'

D. B.



THE TRICKS OF GRAVITY.

GRAVITY, gravity, gravity,
 So clever Sir Isaac found,
 Brings the rosy-cheeked apple
 Down with a flop on the ground;
 For if there were no gravity
 The pippin would never drop out of the tree;
 And if we jumped up into the air,
 We should be evermore floating there—
 A funny thing that would be!

Gravity, gravity, gravity,
 And nothing else at all,
 Brought famous Humpty Dumpty
 Down with a bump from the wall;
 He might have sat on it till now,
 Quizzing us all, and making a row,
 Poking his fun, not caring a rap;
 But Gravity said, 'Come down, old chap,'
 And down he came no-how!

And there lay Humpty Dumpty,
And all the king's horses tried,
And all the king's men, threescore times ten,
To set him the wall astride;
But Gravity had spoiled his looks,
And cracked his bones—so say the books;
And there he lay, and lies there yet,
If folk don't lie, bemired and wet,
The mock of the wise old rooks.

Don't sit on a wall, say they,
Don't climb our old elm-trees,
Don't leave the meadow, and come our way,
Till you have got wings like these;
Or if not wings, a little balloon,
As light as a feather, as round as the moon,
Such as we crows have sometimes seen
When folk are merry, and fields are green,
And the band is playing a tune.

Humpty Dumpty the Second I spied
Stand on a treacherous stair,
When the children were making Christmastide
What it ought to be, pleasant and fair;
With holly, and ivy, and box, and yew,
And a gaily blazoned text or two;
That Eve how busy the young folk were,
And busy old Gravity, too, was there,
His mischievous pranks to do!

Poor Jack aspired, as Jacks aspire,
The foremost man to be;
'I'll stick my holly a wee bit higher
Than any one else, you'll see.'
So up he climbed as high as the door,
And down he came with a terrible roar;
And Lily, and Gussy, and Addy, and I,
Didn't know whether to laugh or cry,
As he measured his length on the floor.

Gravity, gravity, gravity,
We've shown up your tricks in verse;
Jack felt your mischief, sore and stiff,
But oh! that you never did worse!
Never did more than cause a spill,
Or make the ripe apple fall down at your will;
Never did ought to make men weep,
At the foot of the high crag, stern and steep,
Where a mangled form lies still. G. S. O.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT.

THE following story is said to be current amongst the natives of India:—

Owing to the heat, the dust, and other causes, blindness is very common in India, and companies of blind folk are often found living together. In one such village, several of the wisest inhabitants who had been born blind disputed much and long about the shape of the elephant. Four of them were so disputing one evening, when a government elephant was heard coming along the road.

'Ah,' said one, 'here comes an elephant; now we shall be able to settle this matter once and for all.

Let us each go and feel what he is like, and then we shall see who is right and who is wrong.'

To this they all agreed, and in turn went up to the elephant.

The first blind man, being very tall, felt all up and down the animal's side, and then went back contented to his place.

The second came up to the elephant's fore-leg, and, being very short, he only felt that up and down.

The third on coming up met the beast's trunk, and at once returned.

The fourth, coming from the other side, only touched the elephant's tail, which he carefully examined.

'Ah,' said number one, when all were satisfied, 'I told you so; of course, the elephant is just like the side of a house!'

'The side of a house!' said he who had felt the fore-leg, 'it seemed to me more like the pillar of a house.'

'What nonsense you are talking!' said he who handled the trunk; 'why, it is exactly like a spout!'

'You are all wrong,' said he who felt the tail, 'I examined it very carefully, and I can only compare it to a bell-rope!'

Some people's investigations always confirm their previously formed opinions. A. R. B.

ON BOARD THE 'THREE BELLS.'

(Concluded from page 7.)



GEORDIE sighed and awoke; he coughed sadly for some time, and then whispered, 'Ben, I've had a dream; and oh, it was such a beauty of a dream: I was flying up in the air, everything was bright and beautiful about me; the only thing that troubled me was, that I could not see you anywhere. Ben, do you remember the wee lassie that died of the fever next door to us, before father sent us away? Well, Ben,

I saw that girl, and she knew me in a moment, and came running up to meet me. I knew her, too, quite well; yet she was different—oh, so happy-like, and so beautiful! Then, all in a moment I saw an angel looking at me with such lovely eyes! just like the eyes you told me mother had. Well, Ben, that angel asked me if I was happy there; I said, "Oh, yes, so happy, if only I could see Ben." Then I seemed to hear the words, "Ben is coming, but not just yet, he must wait for a little while longer." Now wasn't that a beautiful dream, Ben?'

But Ben was scarcely listening, his heart was thumping loudly in his breast; he heard the sailor preparing to descend again into their prison.

'Geordie,' he whispered, 'lie you still and say nothing, I am going to speak to that man.' And just as the seaman stepped off the lower rung of the ladder, he was confronted by the gaunt form and wild, dark eyes of the starving boy.

The man started back in alarm for a moment, but quickly recovered himself. 'Hallo, you young var-

mint! come out o' this; how many more are there of ye? But ye'll get a rope's end, every mother's son of ye! Quick now, up the ladder with ye.'

But Ben stood still, endeavouring to speak, though his parched tongue was literally cleaving to the roof of his mouth.

'Hallo, Tom,' cried a voice from above, 'what's the row down there? are the rats after ye?'

Then Tom ran up the ladder and explained to his messmates the state of matters down below.

Presently the Captain came forward, and sent down two men with orders to bring Ben at once to the deck.

A few minutes later, and the poor stowaway stood trembling in the hands of his captors, his eyes dazzled by the sudden light, but his faithful heart still fixed upon the little brother, who lay alone and undiscovered below.

The Captain, who was a kindly man, saw his agitation, and noted at the same time his starving condition. Putting his hand firmly but kindly on his shoulder, he said, 'Now, my lad, attend to me, answer me truthfully, and you have nothing to fear: how many more are there down below? for of course you are not alone: now, tell me the truth.'

'There is only Geordie, my little brother,' replied poor Ben, in a hoarse voice. 'Oh, sir, don't thrash him, he is very ill; it was my doing, I am the oldest, and I led him on.'

'Only one other boy,' said the Captain. 'Tom, bring him up at once;' and Tom again descended his ladder.

Meanwhile, great consternation was excited among the onlookers, when Ben suddenly collapsed, and fell like a stone on the deck. The emigrants gathered about him, the women especially being loud in their expressions of compassion for the 'poor starving laddie;' but the Captain ordered every one away, and sent for the doctor.

Meanwhile, Tom again appeared on deck, looking rather scared; and, going up to the Captain, he said, 'The little chap seems very bad, sir, I can't get him to move, it will take two of us to lift him;' and, accompanied by another man, he again went below.

A space was cleared upon deck, and the doctor knelt by the silent and attenuated figure of little Geordie. He felt the pulse, and laid his hand on the heart: then he gently poured a strong stimulant between the nearly closed teeth, and waited.

The Captain and cabin-passengers alone were around him, Ben having been conveyed below and laid, only half conscious, on one of the seamen's bunks.

Presently, the doctor stooped down and listened; then he lifted the closed lid and examined the eye. Turning to the Captain he quietly said, 'It is all over, the boy is dead.'

'Dead!' repeated the onlookers, who, in their well-fed, comfortable condition, almost felt as though this miserable death lay at their door.

There was silence for a little while, and then one by one the passengers slowly dispersed, leaving the doctor and the quiet, elderly gentleman, mentioned at the beginning of our story, together.

'Do you suppose now, doctor,' said the latter, 'that this poor boy has actually died of hunger?'

'Scarcely that,' replied the doctor; 'there has not been time for that since we left Glasgow; but from the look of things, I should say these boys have had a very hard life for a long time before coming on board; the elder boy has survived it, being older and stronger in constitution; probably, nothing could have saved this little one.'

'I have a large store in New York, as you know,' said the gentleman, 'and plenty of room for young hands; I have half a mind to take charge of the elder brother; do you think he will live?'

'Oh, no doubt of it,' said the doctor; 'in your hands he will do very well; it certainly will be a kind deed. He has suffered much, I dare say, for so young a lad.' And so it was settled.

Next day rose bright and fair, just as though there were no such thing as sin, sorrow, or suffering in the world: the sun shone, and the sea was like a great sheet of liquid glass, through which the *Three Bells* swiftly ploughed her way towards the mighty West. Something unusual seemed to be going on: seats had been arranged underneath an awning on deck, and the cabin-passengers were slowly coming upstairs, and taking their places. The emigrants, in crowded rows, were all present, and a solemn hush seemed to lie over all. Suddenly a bell was rung, the steamer lay-to, and all hands came on deck; the Captain opened his book, and in reverential tones he read the beautiful 'Burial Service for those who Die at Sea.'

Ben was not present; by the doctor's orders he was kept below, being unable, both bodily and mentally, for so sad a ceremony as the present. But he understood what was going on; and as he heard the heavy splash, and knew that it was the body of little Geordie going down to his grave in the deep, deep sea—little Geordie: the only one who had ever loved him since his gentle mother was taken away,—what wonder that the poor street Arab should cover his eyes with his bony hands and weep such bitter tears as few boys ever shed?

It was some hours after the funeral, when he was roused by the sound of approaching footsteps. A gentle lady stood beside him, looking at him with pitying eyes; softly and kindly she spoke, holding his hand, and trying to lead his thoughts from suffering and death to happiness and Heaven. I cannot say that poor Ben understood all he heard, but his boyish heart responded to the love and sympathy written on his visitor's face; he could almost think he heard once more the voice of the long-lost mother who had prayed God to bless her little lads.

We need not follow any further the history of the Glasgow stowaway. It is sufficient to say, that when he reached his new home in the Far West he did not prove ungrateful for the kindness shown to him; and now that he is a grown man, and an educated man with boys and others working under his orders, he never forgets the time when he was a footsore, Glasgow lad, without a friend in the world save one faithful little heart.

For 'Geordie's sake,' no poor, friendless boy passes his door without having his wants supplied and his story inquired into; and many a wretched stowaway since then has been rescued by his hand from a life of cruel want and sad despair.

B. McK.



Ben carried below by a Seaman.



The Keeper's Daughter in the Moonlit Lane.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 11.)

CHAPTER III.



HE young Flowers always felt a sort of proprietorship in Hill Park, as it had belonged to their ancestors; and though, as I have said, Jill had not cultivated the acquaintance of the Miss Collets, and Mr. Flower had steadily declined any invitations there, and had hardly got to know any of them even by sight, the boys considered themselves entitled to roam about the woods and the outskirts of the park at their own free will, and would have extended their trespassing to the gardens and house itself but for Mr. Flower's special prohibition.

At one part of the park there was a little wooded ravine with a stream running through it, and at the end a keeper's cottage, now uninhabited, and half in ruins, and overgrown with ivy, where now and then the Collets would have a rustic tea, and invite their friends; and smart young ladies would trip about among the bushes, leaving deep marks of high heels on the mossy paths, and tearing delicate laces and muslins on brambles, and staining softly-tinted gloves with blackberries; while the gentlemen would look through their eye-glasses at the rabbits popping about among the fern, and flick away the gnats with their handkerchiefs, and wonder why on earth people who had a first-rate tennis-lawn and a cool drawing-room should choose to be scratched and bitten and tear their clothes and drink spiders in their tea, however picturesque the surroundings might be.

What the invited guests grumbled over internally the uninvited young Flowers resented more openly, for they considered that the ravine was their own especial property, all the more duly signed, sealed, and delivered, because the Flower Ghost made the old cottage his head-quarters, and no man, woman, or child about the park, or, for the matter of that, about Shettle, would pass within half a mile of the place at night, least of all on a moonlight night, for then the ghost was said to be more especially active, and to be on view at the cottage or in the deep, tree-shaded lane that led down into the ravine.

There were several stories to account for this restless spirit, and sometimes one, sometimes another was the favourite. One was that a gay young Flower had come wooing the keeper's daughter, and that the girl's father had shot him as the two lovers stood together in the moonlit lane, and that his body lay buried in the ravine, and his discontented ghost roamed about, disturbed that his poor bones were not laid among the other Flower remains in Shettle churchyard, and that his murder remained unavenged. Tradition told of the sudden disappearance of one of the Flower family, and that he was never heard of again, and that the last keeper who lived in that cottage was a strange, gloomy man, and had a crazy daughter.

The other story was of older date, and went back to the time of the Civil Wars, when an old steward was left in charge of the place while his master went

with the troop he had raised to serve his king. There was a sudden descent of the Parliament troops, and the old steward buried the valuable plate in the ravine, and would not divulge the secret of where it lay, though the brutal soldiers ill-treated and tortured him till he died under their hands. It is the old steward's ghost who wanders through the wood, seeking some member of the old family to whom he may reveal where the treasure lies hid—great massive bowls and salvers, cups and flagons of vast value, richly chased, and one and all bearing the Flower dragon.

Jill and the boys loved this story the best, and generally scouted the other, though Jill, when the boys were away and she might indulge in a little sentiment without fear of being laughed at, liked to picture the keeper's pretty daughter waiting in the lane for her gay young lover, and the echoing shot through the wood that ended his life and crazed her brain.

But as a rule the other story was firmly believed, and they would not listen to Mr. Flower's suggestion that the absence of any old family plate among the Flowers was more likely to be due to the extravagance of their ancestors than to the honesty of any old steward. They had more than once begun excavations in likely parts of the ravine, and had come to serious words with Mr. Collet's gamekeepers, who could not be induced to believe that these researches were altogether unconnected with game; and it nearly led to their entire exclusion from the ravine, for, to their disgust, they found a brand new board nailed up to a tree, with some insulting notice about trespassers, and the hole in the hedge, by which they generally made their way, filled up with stakes and brambles. But as the keepers one and all had a liking for the boys, and the sort of feeling that the place rightly belonged to their family, no notice was taken of the speedy disappearance of the notice-board and stakes; and West, the head-keeper, meeting Jill one day, in friendly consultation over a fox-terrier puppy with a broken leg, hinted in a roundabout way that as long as there was no more of that digging, it would be all right as far as he and his mates were concerned. As the boys were heartily tired of their unsuccessful diggings, they agreed to give them up, and resolved that the only thing to be done was to meet the ghost, and learn from him the exact place.

It was all very well to agree to this in broad daylight, and they all stoutly maintained that they were not the least afraid of ghosts, and would no more mind having a chat with this old fellow than with any one clad in solid flesh and blood; but certain it is that Jill and Davy, stopping later than usual one evening in persistent and ineffectual attempts to capture a hoary old jack who lived in one of the pools at the bottom of the ravine, and had defied all efforts fair or foul to ensnare him for many years, had come running home breathless and white-faced, having left all their fishing-tackle behind them, having been seized with sudden horror at the stillness of the wood with the moonlight touching here and there on tree, trunk, or gently stirring foliage, at the black shadows in whose depth there seemed to be mysterious movement, and at the

strange noises, a rustle—was it the leaves? a crack—was it a branch? a sigh—was it the wind?—sounds that you never hear by day, or, at any rate, never notice, but which on a moonlight night in a haunted wood conjure up in five minutes enough grisly ghosts to frighten any one. Of course, they were thoroughly laughed at for their fears, and Davy, boy-like, tried to throw it all upon Jill, and declared that she was in such a funk that she ran as if a mad bull was after her, and he only ran too for company, and as for the fishing-tackle, he forgot it; but when Martin proposed that he should go back at once and fetch it, as a proof that he was not frightened, he was reduced to submission and tears, and in future avoided the subject of ghosts, or any boasting about his own pluck in such matters.

But notwithstanding this scare, the ravine continued to be a very favourite resort in the holidays, and it was always the custom the first day the boys were at home to go solemnly to inspect their territory, and hoist the Flower banner, a red pocket-handkerchief with a white dragon on it, over the porch, and see what encroachments the keepers or the pretended owners of the place might have been guilty of, or what time and age had been about with the crazy old cottage, which every year grew more lopsided, with fewer panes of glass left whole in the windows, and a thicker growth of glossy ivy all over it.

The space in front of the cottage that had once been the keeper's garden still asserted its claims to better birth and higher cultivation by a show of white periwinkles and coloured primroses in the spring, though the wild flowers tried to put down such pretensions, and claim the territory as their own; and there were one or two old apple-trees who made a brave show of pink and white blossoms, but either through age or natural infirmity only produced apples of a choleraic species.

The door was kept locked, and the key in the keeper's possession, so at one time the kitchen window had to be used as a means of entrance and exit, till Jack found out that the back door-key at Bengrove fitted the cottage-door nicely; after which discovery nurse's peace of mind at night was ruined by the disappearance of the key, which never came to hand after having been put down Davy's back to cure an attack of nose-bleeding, and the loss of which she set down to the deep designs of burglars, though Mr. Flower assured her that there was nothing in Bengrove worth a burglar's trouble, and that such dangerous characters always found out how the land lay before taking active measures.

Most people might have thought that there was not much to be gained by getting into the cottage, as it was very stuffy and dirty, and the ceilings had a tendency to come down on your head, and floors and stairs to give way under your feet; and the chimney was so choked with starlings' nests and rubbish, that the first time a fire was lighted there without taking proper precautions they were nearly smothered with smoke, and within an inch of setting the whole place on fire; so that now one of the first proceedings in the holidays was sweeping the chimney, an interesting occupation, but disastrous in its effects on clothes and hair, and leading to lively scenes with nurse over dilapidated garments.

Jack had grown so much this last term that Davy was the only one small enough to get up the chimney to fetch down a starling's nest, which Jill altogether refused to have knocked down anyhow, as there were young birds in it, and a mother flying round and round with those peculiar peevish cries by which starlings express their agitation.

It was while Davy was half way up the chimney, and likely to remain there, from a seeming impossibility of getting either up or down again, that Jill confided to Jack her anxieties about father, and how she was quite sure that his illness was in a great measure due to his worrying over money matters, and how a certain Uncle Will and his son, Cousin Lance, had been writing bothering letters, which always made father worse.

Jack had heard of Uncle Will often before, and knew that he was father's eldest brother, and for the most part lived abroad, and that he was not a very pleasant subject of conversation, and that his letters, though hailed by the boys as bearing foreign postage-stamps, were not as welcome to father, and generally made him look anxious and worried.

'I think,' Jill said, 'that he's been asking father for money, and I think father sent him some, for I had to take a letter to be registered.'

'I say,' said Jack, 'it's a horrid shame, that's what it is!'

'Yes, that's just what father said; but I'm not sure that he meant me to hear it,' went on Jill, doubtfully, wondering if she were betraying confidence by telling Jack. 'He kept saying it to himself, "It's a shame! it's a shame! it's not fair on the boys!" And oh, Jack! what do you think he said afterwards?—that he didn't think he could afford to keep Martin any longer at Radbourne, because it's so expensive! Oh, Jack! do you think he really meant it? And what will Martin say? He's always grumbling about the food at Radbourne, and I know he doesn't like his class-master much, and he says some of the boys are shocking cads; but I don't think he'd like never to go back, just when he's getting on so well, and I know, too, there was something said about his trying for a scholarship at Oxford.'

Just at this juncture Davy came tumbling down the chimney with a shower of miscellaneous articles—mortar, bricks, thatch, young jackdaws, feathers, and dust. He came down in a sitting position in the grate with a bruised knee and a cut wrist and a very dirty face, and was very angry because Jack and Jill could not help laughing at him, sitting enthroned on the bars rubbing his leg.

'You can just go up the chimney yourselves next time,' he said; 'it shook so, I thought it was all coming down along with me; and those young starlings are nothing but neck, and so soft there's nothing to lay hold of; and you were jabbering away down here, and never lent a hand when I wanted you to catch them. I've two more in my pocket, but I expect they're squashed.'

Jack was apparently entirely taken up with the young birds, who certainly were not very pleasing objects, with very long, limp necks and big, sightless grey eyeballs, and a few scattered hairs on the top of their heads, which gave them the appearance of great age. Those that had survived their fall had to



Rescued.

be put into an impromptu nest, and stowed away in the roof, where their anxious parents soon found them out, and supplied their wants.

Jill had been longing for a little comfort from Jack, and consoling assurances that father could not really have meant what he said, and that Martin was sure to go back to Radbourne; but the starlings seemed to have put it all out of his head, and she did not like to say any more about it, and spoil the pleasure of the first day of the holidays.

But all the time Jack's heart was full of what Jill had told him. Poor old Mart! who had been working away so jolly hard just to please the governor, and would not go in for any cricket and fun, so that he might get on and get an exhibition! Mart was very close, and never talked big like most chaps; but Jack had had a peep now and then behind the scenes, and had guessed something of what Mart had

it in his heart to be and to do for the old governor's sake. And then, what a pleasure and pride Martin was to father, because he was clever and always did well at school!

'It wouldn't matter half as much about Davy and me,' said Jack to himself with a melancholy remembrance of his humble position in his class. 'Father don't seem to expect us to do anything much, but things must be desperate bad if Martin is to be taken away from school. What is to be done?'

(To be continued.)

RESCUED.

POOOR Pussy! listen how she mews,
Her soft grey fur is drenched and flat;
How strange it seems that one could choose
To drown a harmless little cat!



A Risky Ride.

Please, Robert, let me dry her fur,
And then we'll take her quickly home;
Poor little pet! you're rescued now,
And never more will need to roam.

I love a gentle little cat,
I love its soft and playful ways;
So, Pussy, you may come with us,
We'll make you happy all your days. D. B.

A RISKY RIDE.

ABOUT one hundred years ago Mr. Chase, who afterwards became Bishop of Ohio, was a traveling missionary in the State of New York, a district equal in extent to the whole of England and Scotland. In this vast region, which now has in it an

army of pastors, there were then only six clergymen, who ministered to a few scattered congregations. Travelling in winter was very dangerous—a contrast to the railways which now traverse the country.

On one occasion the missionary, finding no public conveyance, was obliged to hire a sleigh and horses to carry him over the ice, which in some places was covered with water and threatening to break up for the summer. 'The cracks in the ice,' he writes, 'became more and more visible, and seemed to increase in width as we drove rapidly along. The horses having trotted without injury over the small cracks soon became accustomed to leap over the wider ones. Happily none were so wide as to let in the runners of the sleigh lengthwise, and we blessed God silently (not a word was spoken) for every successful leap.'

A WINTER VISITOR.

A LITTLE Robin Redbreast sat upon my garden gate,
And wondered in his little heart why I should be so late;
For breakfast-time had come, and he was hungry,
Cold and sad—
One tiny little crumb of bread would make poor Robin glad.

The leaves had dropped from off the trees and fluttered to the ground,
The singing birds had disappeared, and silence reigned around,
The butterflies had gone, the busy bees were in their hive,
And 'twas so cold that Robin scarce could keep himself alive.

One tiny foot he folded up beneath his little wing,
And tried to keep his spirits up, but yet he could not sing;
For old John Frost had come, and rudely silenced all the rills,
Had sealed with frost the window-panes and whitened all the hills.

Then, Robin dear, we must be kind, and give you food to eat,
The crumbs we often waste will be to you a pleasant treat.
Don't fly away, dear little bird, but banish all your fear,
When snow lies deep upon the ground you're always welcome here.

D. B.

THE PAPER MUFF.

I SAW a picture of content the other day which touched me strangely. It was very cold: the pale March sun had given up its feeble efforts to take the edge off the March wind. The people in the street were hurrying along with blue faces and red noses, and heads held down to avoid the cutting blasts. I watched them with pity from my cosy sitting-room. Presently a little girl passed by. She was scantily clad, and her feet were bare. The old black shawl which was wrapped about her shoulders was much too large for her, and trailed behind in a forlorn-looking peak. The rim of her hat was torn, and a draggled feather hung limply over one eye. Yet the little maiden was walking along with a brisk step; her head was high in the air, and a smile of content was on her face. And why? Because, having found a substantial paper bag, she had torn open the closed end of it, and putting her little cold hands within, she was enjoying the unusual luxury of a muff! No one had explained to her the peculiar efficacy of paper in excluding the air: I do not suppose she had ever heard of paper blankets; but her native wit had supplied the lack of knowledge, and had made her the proud possessor of a muff.

Many comfortably-clad figures passed my window that cold March day, with hands buried in all

varieties of cosy muffs—fur, velvet, satin—but not one seemed half so conscious of being well clad, or smiled with half such proud content, as my little ragged girl with her bare feet and paper muff.

C. P. G.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

A Tale from a Kaffir Store,
founded on fact.



E had just run up a new store, about three or four days' journey from the boundary of Kimberley.

Trade all around our old place had been completely done, for a Cape Town Company had begun to lay a railway line farther up into the country, and that was attracting both natives and Europeans into its neighbourhood. So my mate and I had bought a piece of ground near where the line was destined to pass, and we had built our new store upon it, hoping to benefit by the men employed on the work, as well as by the native tribes, on whom we generally depended for any traffic we did.

I was quite alone at the store at the time of which I write, for my mate was down at Cape Town, making arrangements with the firm who supplied us with goods for our native trade; and I did not expect either him or the mule-waggons, with our fresh supply of stores, to come up again for more than a day or two. The loneliness of my position was extreme. The tents with the first instalment of workers for the line were beyond call, behind a rising ground that stretched away before our store. During the day, of course, I saw many of the men as well as Kaffirs, but at night there was not a soul near on whom to rely should any danger befall me. Had I pitched my tent in the middle of the great desert of Sahara I could scarcely have been more completely alone.

I had had a hard day's work, trying to get into some order the bales, barrels, and canisters that lay about the, as yet, only room which we had built. I had so far succeeded as to get the various articles piled up in a great heap at one end of the cabin, leaving a clear space in the middle in which to begin more detailed operations the next day. In the other end lay my bed—a pile of skins; while on the rough hearth a fire burned brightly, for in these warm climates one has to take precautions against the chills which succeed at night to the scorching heat of the day, and which, if not guarded against, often prove most dangerous.

My supper I had cooked and eaten, and I was just filling my pipe preparatory to settling down for as enjoyable an evening as the circumstances would permit of, when I was startled by hearing a heavy footstep crunching down the chips of wood and bits of ashes that were lying outside. I confess that my heart beat more quickly than usual as I stood up and listened. Presently a loud knock came to the door. I opened it cautiously with one hand,

while with the other I held the grip of the pistol which I always carried in the breast of my coat, and asked in as confident a tone of voice as I could command, 'Who's there?' A rough-looking, heavy-browed man, stepped into the light.

'You'll not know me, mate,' he said, looking cautiously around, 'but I'm pushing on to Kimberley to try my luck at the mines, and I want a bed here for the night.'

Such requests are not uncommon in that part of the world, but I did not feel inclined to grant it on this occasion, as I did not believe what the man had said; his whole ill-favoured appearance telling so plainly of the wild, rough life at the diamond-mines, that I was quite sure that instead of going towards Kimberley he had just come down from that direction. He gave me no chance of refusing, however, but he shut the door, pushed past me, and strode into the middle of the cabin.

'You're alone, I see,' he remarked.

I could not deny the fact, so I was silent; and my visitor, without turning to look at me, lifted up a couple of guns that stood in the corner beside my bed.

'You needn't trouble to look at those,' I said, 'they're unloaded.' The man took no notice of my remark, but went on with his examination of the pieces, and then finding that, as I had said, both were empty, he replaced them in the corner, and then sat down on a box that stood at the foot of my pile of rugs.

'You needn't refuse to give me a bed,' he growled out, looking at me fixedly, 'for I mean to stay; there's not another place I could get to before to-morrow morning, and I've no thought of spending the night out of doors, so you'd better make up your mind to my company at once.'

If ever a man felt himself fixed on the horns of a dilemma, I did at that moment. There were 50*l.* in gold hidden beneath the rugs of my bed. Now if, on any pretext, I left the store in order to go down to the tents and fetch up some one to help me to entertain my dangerous-looking visitor, he would, probably, possess himself not only of this money, but also of anything else of value that lay about, and make off before I could return. If, on the other hand, I remained where I was, I stood a bad chance of escaping scathless myself; for that the man had come with some bad intention I could not, after his extraordinary behaviour, doubt. I chose, however, the latter alternative.

Looking at him more attentively than before, I saw that he far excelled me in size and strength, and that my only chance lay in striving to make up for my inferiority in that respect by keeping as cool a head as possible on my shoulders, and not giving him a chance of carrying out whatever evil purpose he might have in his mind. So I seated myself on the end of a barrel, clasping the handle of my pistol tightly with one hand, while with the other I tried to light my pipe, and said, as carelessly as I could,—

'Please yourself; you can go or stay, just as you like.'

He made no reply, but in a few minutes began to fumble with something at his waist, which I took to

be the handle of one of the long knives which most up-country men carry about them. (I was sure he had no fire-arms, else he would not have kept quiet so long.) I felt that the tug of war was coming.

'Hadh't you better be turning in, mate?' he went on.

'No,' I replied; 'I'm going to spend the night here.'

'Oh! that's your game, is it?' and the knife was hitched out.

'Yes,' I said, 'that's my game, and it doesn't take much to see what yours is. You can turn in if you like, but as for me, I don't close an eye. And look you here, if you move a foot to come near me, or lift an arm, you're a dead man.' And as I spoke I drew out my pistol, and held it before him.

The man changed his tone; he saw my advantage the moment I showed my fire-arms.

'Hospitable!' he said, with a sneer.

'Yes,' said I, 'it's the way we have here; and if you don't like it you can go.'

For some time—it seemed to me to be hours, but I suppose it would only be about ten minutes—we sat thus; I holding my pistol in my right hand, and my pipe in the other; he staring at me sullenly, and giving an occasional low growl, like an uneasy watchdog. At length he spoke,—

'You can drop that now, mate, I'm off.' And he loosened his hold of his knife. I rose.

'Out with you then,' I said.

He opened the door himself and went out, and I followed him just to the threshold. As he stepped into the darkness he turned abruptly round and said, 'Won't you shake hands with a man? I didn't mean any harm.'

'No,' I replied, 'none of that;' for I saw what he was after. 'If you're hard-up for a bed, down you go to the tents;' for I knew that there were enough men down there to make it a matter of indifference to them who came to spend the night.

He went off, and I waited till I heard his footsteps die away in the distance; and then I went in, and made fast my door, and I can tell you I barricaded it well up with barrels and boxes; and it wasn't till more than a couple of hours had passed that I was cool enough again to lie down and try to snatch a little sleep. When I did so it was with my loaded pistol at my head, and a bright fire burning, that nothing might take me unawares; for I felt that I had had a narrow escape indeed. Had I not had the advantage over my visitor in possessing fire-arms, I would, probably, by that time have been a dead man; and although it is an easy enough thing to keep a bold face and a steady nerve in a crowded city, with a well-ordered police about, it's a very different thing when you're sitting bird-alone in a log-house, with nobody near enough to hear you if you were to shout yourself hoarse.

The next morning I went down to the tents, and heard that my friend had been there. He had been peaceable enough, and some of the men laughed at me when I related my adventure with him, and even hinted that I was inventing a cock-and-bull story. But I had not heard the last of my strange visitor yet.



A Narrow Escape.



Little Jill Shot by Mottram.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 20.)

CHAPTER IV.



WHILE Jack and Davy and Jill were in the cottage in the ravine, busy tidying up and repairing some of the ravages of wind and weather, Davy, who was cleaning the window and clearing away some of the matted ivy that obscured the light, gave a sudden 'Cave!'

Jack and Jill were unearthing some treasures of theirs that they kept hidden away in a cupboard under the stairs, every article of which had some story attached to it—an old black kettle that Martin and Jack had rescued from the tail of a poor persecuted dog, and after wreaking terrible vengeance on the persons of the persecutors had carried off the instrument of torture in triumph, and had found that a little mending would make it available for tea purposes in the ravine; some mugs which the boys had won by shying at cocoa-nuts at Shettle Fair, and a tin tea-pot, which had found its way by some mysterious means into the pool at the bottom of the ravine, and had been dived for one winter's day for more than an hour by Jack and Davy, under the firm persuasion that it was part of the hidden plate belonging to the Flower family, until they were nearly blue with cold and choked with mud. However, though not of as much intrinsic value as if it had been made of solid silver, it turned in quite as usefully for tea-parties in the ravine; and now Jack discovered that it had been chosen as a home by a mouse, who had made herself very comfortable, and had brought up a large and thriving family in it.

At Davy's warning, Jack and Jill left the cupboard and came up to the bedroom window to reconnoitre, and through the little thick diamond panes, that not even all Davy's persuasions could make more than semi-transparent, they saw, much distorted by the glass, a stout old gentleman coming up the ravine, very hot and out of breath, followed by a tall, awkward boy of fourteen, with a gun in his hand.

'Midas!' whispered Jack; and through a hole in the window Jill got a clearer view of him, with his big ears and light eyes, rather too high up in his head as regards his other features, and a loose, flapping mouth, that naturally fell open.

'We chuck bread pills right into his mouth at dinner,' whispered Davy; 'it's always open, and he never knows where they come from, he's such a duffer! I wonder if he's ever fired off that gun, and if he knows one end from the other? It's more than he does with a cricket-bat.'

'If the old fellow wasn't there, we'd slip down and teach the young idea how to shoot.'

But Joe Mottram's instruction in the science of arms was not to be left to the young Flowers, whose will was certainly great, and mother-wit considerable, but actual experience of his matters not very much more extensive than Midas's. West had

evidently been appointed to meet Mr. Mottram and his son here in the ravine, and he now made his appearance with a couple of dogs at his heels, who sniffed about the cottage-door suspiciously and did their best to reveal the presence of the spectators.

Mr. Mottram was not near enough for them to hear what he was saying, but they guessed that he was commending young Midas to West's care; and they saw the keeper take the gun and examine it and nod his head approvingly, and then the old gentleman went off along the lane leading up towards the house, while his son and West turned down again into the ravine, and from time to time the sound of a shot among the trees told that the rabbits were in the wars.

Both Jack and Davy were a good deal upset by this incident, and whenever they began to forget about it the sound of a gun brought back the delights of rabbit-shooting to their minds—delights that other fellows enjoy, while they were entirely out of it.

'If I hadn't always made such jolly fun of Midas at school,' said Jack, 'I'd make up to him now. He's an awfully good-natured fellow, but I haven't the face after the life I've led him. Look here, Davy, you've not been half as bad, why don't you go in for him?'

'Well,' said Davy, regretfully, 'you know there was that affair with the snuff in his Ovid; he knew that I had a hand in it. Oh, Jill, it was a lark, though; directly he was set on to construe and lifted up his book, for he's as blind as an owl, he began sneezing, and he sneezes just like the works in the kitchen clock when it's wound up, and all the fellows were splitting, and old Chambers himself couldn't keep off the grin, and the more they laughed the more he sneezed, till I thought he'd have come to pieces.'

'If we'd only known,' sighed Jack, 'we would have been monstrous polite. Oh, you don't know, Jill, how pretty behaved I can be if I try. Well, it's no use thinking of that now; perhaps Martin could manage it when he comes home. Come on, let's go home to dinner.'

But as luck would have it, just as they were climbing the steep path which led up to the gap in the hedge, they saw Midas and the keeper coming down, and a goodly string of rabbits, hung on to the keeper's gun, showed that one of them, at any rate, had had some sport that morning.

The Flowers hid among the underwood till they had passed, and then nothing would serve Jack but to creep down after them and see if that fellow really could shoot anything.

'He looks as if he was afraid the gun would bite him,' said Jack; 'just look at him, and you bet he'll go in and make out that he shot every one of those rabbits on West's gun. Come on, Davy, let's have a look.'

'But it's dinner-time,' suggested Jill, 'and father will be waiting.'

'Oh, we won't be a minute; you go on and say we're coming.'

But Jill did not care to go on and bear the brunt of nurse's wrath if the dinner was kept waiting, as was often the case when the boys got oblivious of time.

She knew that father would not notice the delay, for she had left him writing letters, and some of them on foreign paper, which was always a lengthy matter, and took away any little appetite he had.

So she sat still where she was under the spreading bracken, watching the myriad of little insects flitting about in the shaft of sunlight that found its way through the thick beech-tree overhead, striking down through the shadows like something solid that she might grasp with her two hands and move aside. The sound of steps and voices had died away and she had not heard a shot for some time, and she was beginning to wonder if the boys had gone home another way and to feel hungry, and to think that she would not wait any longer, when she heard West's voice at no great distance on the other side of the ravine, saying, 'Then I'll wish you good morning, sir, as you'll have had enough of it by now and be thinking of going home to dinner, leastways lunch. You'll make a first-rate shot one of these days, I'll be bound, only don't go to be in too great a hurry; take your time and a good aim and you can't very well miss. And don't go carrying your gun full cock through the bushes. There's more ugly accidents happens along of that than any other way. Then I'll step up to the house for orders to-morrow morning. Good day, sir.'

And off went West, leaving Mottram at the turn of the lane leading up to the house, where Jill could see him quite plainly between the trees, handling his gun gingerly, as if there was no knowing from which quarter of it danger was most to be apprehended. She wondered if Jack and Davy could see him, and thought what fun they would make of him; but her wonder on this score was soon satisfied by the sudden appearance of the two boys, who came walking along the path as if it were the turnpike-road and the most likely place for taking a morning constitutional.

'Hallo, Mottram!' exclaimed Jack, with the greatest surprise, as if he had not been watching him pretty well for the last two hours. 'Why, whoever would have thought of seeing you here?'

'Hallo, Flower!' was the answer, without, as far as Jill could see, the slightest sign of the resentment that would have seemed natural after the persecutions to which he had been exposed. 'I thought I saw you and your brother at the station yesterday.'

'Oh!' said Jack, 'appearances are deceitful. I dare say, though, it may have been Mr. Gladstone and John Bright; the mistake is often made.'

Jill gave a little chuckle to herself, remembering how polite Jack had declared he could be, and now he could not resist chaffing even for a minute.

'Have you had good sport?' asked Davy, in his company tone of voice, the effect of which was somewhat spoilt by the extremely dirty face he had got in the cottage chimney.

'Pretty fair,' said Mottram; 'I'm rather new to it at present, you see.'

'Oh, don't be modest,' said Jack; 'we met West just now with a kit of rabbits. What a jolly gun you've got! Look out, there's a big rabbit over there! Couldn't you just pick him off? There's a chance for a good shot!'

Jill peeped out of her cover of fern to see where the threatened rabbit might be, and saw Mottram raising his gun slowly to his shoulder with the muzzle directed full towards her. She did not stop to consider if the rabbit might be on the hill either above or below her, or if it was merely the invention of Jack's fertile imagination, or to reflect that Mottram's aim was not unerring, and that it was two chances to one if he fired at all; and, of course, it never occurred to her that the safest position would have been flat on the ground.

She only felt that the muzzle was directed full at her, and that Jack had forgotten she was there or thought she had gone home long ago, and she jumped 'up from her hiding-place with a loud cry of terror.

'Oh, Jack! Jack! I'm here. Don't let him fire!' And by so doing brought about the very catastrophe she was trying to avert, for the surprise made Mottram give a start and pull the trigger hastily, and the aim which on every other occasion had wavered up and down and from side to side, and ultimately carried the charge far above the head of the intended victim, now went with a cold-blooded directness straight at little Jill; and almost simultaneously with the flash and report the terror-stricken boys heard a scream, and saw their little sister fall forward and roll into the fern.

(To be continued.)

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

HARK! the Christmas waits are singing
Down the frosty street!

Hark! the dear old carol ringing

With its cadence sweet.

'Hear the angels' hymn to us,

In terrâ pax hominibus.'

The way-worn traveller now returning

To his home again,

Faint and sweet the air discerning,

Hears the joyful strain:

'List the tale they tell us,

In terrâ pax hominibus.'

Now the weary sufferer lying

On his bed of pain,

Hears the music softly dying

Then swell out again:

'Hear the angels' tale to us,

In terrâ pax hominibus.'

E. C. H.

TOO MUCH CEREMONY.

THE politeness of the Japanese is now well known, but few people understand how great a value that nation sets upon the proper way of performing various ceremonies. So much do they esteem the right way of doing things, that some students of Japanese etiquette are said to make a living by teaching young people the various forms for the making of tea and other social civilities.

A. R. B.



STEPHEN CARLTON'S OFFERING.

A Story for Christmas.

IT was Christmas Eve—a clear, frosty day. The air was full of a half-concealed brightness, that glimmer and sparkle of the winter sun which is felt in an exhilarating lightness of atmosphere more than it is seen in open sunbeams.

Stephen Carlton, a boy of twelve summers, had risen early to go on an errand to the neighbouring town of Newbury, but it was an errand that he did not like.

The boy's father was a gentleman by birth and education, but one of reduced income, and an invalid; he had lately been trying to eke out scanty means by applying himself to the work of wood-carving, and had just finished a delicate and beautiful miniature cabinet, upon which he had spent much care and pains.

Stephen's errand was to try to sell this exquisite piece of carved work, and the proceeds thereof were to be used to procure fare a little better than ordinary for Christmas Day.

In his infancy Stephen's mother had died, and the boy had no remembrance of her, yet he had suffered no want of parental tenderness, for in his father's

heart there had ever been for him an abundant spring of loving solicitude and gentle care.

To part with this cabinet—his dear father's cherished work—was now a sore trial to Stephen; he had watched its progress with the utmost interest; had seen with the keen eyes of devoted love the close attention and care bestowed on the work by his father; had noted every leaf, and twig, and flower as they took shape and beauty under the worker's hand; and now, to sacrifice the finished model in exchange for a little paltry sum of money, seemed to the ardent boy an act of cruel sacrilege; to give it all up in order to provide a richer Christmas dinner than could otherwise have been obtained was pain to him, almost more than he could bear: the act to his mind savoured of the mean and base. And yet it was his father's will and command. How could Stephen dare to judge it thus?

And Mr. Carlton was a resolute man; his was not a mind that could be swayed by weak entreaty when he saw clearly that his own course was best.

At first, when Stephen had begged that the cabinet might be spared, and kept as a home treasure, his father had felt disposed to yield, knowing that his son's love for himself endeared the work, and was the main reason of his wish to preserve it: but on the mention of the Christmas dinner some little faltering of the



Stephen and the Merchant.

boy's trust was perceptible, and Mr. Carlton felt this a right occasion for a further education of that trust.

So Stephen, in obedience to his father's strict command, had risen early that clear Christmas Eve, and, in spite of his heavy heart and lighter burden, his walk of four miles to the town was inwoven with enjoyment. First, the boy passed by farms and cottage homes, where the anticipation of a holiday and good cheer was brightening the faces of farm-labourers, and quickening their steps about their daily round of work. The cattle, just turned out for a few hours' grazing in the fields, seemed to be sharing the enjoyment of the season, and frisked about their boundaries as if in festive mood.

As Stephen drew nearer to the town sounds of bustle and business were borne to his ears on the clear

frosty air. There was a stir of much a-doing that Christmas Eve, for had not the turkeys to be bought and the puddings to be boiled for a thousand families? and were there not a dozen churches to be decorated, and a score of poor families in each parish to be visited, and made the recipients of some Christmas bounty?

The young traveller felt his feet move faster and his heart beat more quickly as he entered Newbury; but now to find the store to which his father had directed him, and to discharge his errand faithfully, was his first care.

Mr. Carlton had left his son but little discretion in the matter of selling the cabinet. He was to take it to a dealer in fancy goods, and ask ten shillings as its price; if this was considered too large a sum he might

take a lower one—whatever he could get—but at some price the cabinet must be sold that day.

Stephen faltered as he crossed the threshold of that little store of ornamental wares; it was the first time he had been sent on such an errand, and he knew not how to introduce his subject. As he entered a stout pompous-looking man stepped forward from an inner room, and asked what was wanted.

The boy told, as shortly as possible, that he had come with a wish to sell the cabinet he carried, and which he now released from its wrappings and displayed to the dealer.

The man's eyes opened wide at the sight of the exquisite piece of carving, but he feigned not to wish to buy.

'My business here is to sell,' said he. 'What could I do with a gimcrack thing like that? Who do you suppose would buy it from me?'

'My father bade me ask ten shillings for the cabinet,' Stephen said, bravely. 'It is worth much more than that, and any gentleman who knows the value of beautiful things would say so.'

Mr. Mason, the dealer, secretly knew that the boy was right, and also desired to secure the ornament, yet he wished further to beat down the price, and make a gain of it.

'Impudent boy!' he answered, 'to set up your judgment above your father's, and think you can teach a dealer his trade! I'll give you five shillings for the article, and you may think yourself lucky to get that.'

Stephen discerned in the man's manner and voice that he admired the beautiful work, and would probably give more for it than he was now offering; and he answered, firmly,—

'No, it shall not be sold for five shillings; unless, indeed, I cannot find a customer elsewhere. I will take it from door to door through the High Street rather than sell my father's fine work at such a sacrifice.'

Mr. Mason turned away to serve a new comer, and Stephen reasoned with himself,—

'Am I disobeying my father to refuse this man's offer, and leave his premises without selling the cabinet? Would my father choose that I, his son, should go from door to door trying to sell his work? And yet, ought I to let it go—this work of so many days and so much care—for half the price he set upon it? What ought I to do?'

One upward thought and glance of the boy's mind seemed to bring back light upon them.

'I will go to the Exchange,' resolved he, 'where all the richest merchants are assembled, and ask permission to show my merchandise there. The Exchange is a fair place for even gentlemen to sell in.'

With this intention Stephen began quickly to replace the wrappings about his treasured charge; and the dealer, seeing what he was about, came forward uneasily, saying,—

'Don't be a fool, boy, but take the five shillings I offer you. It is easier to set a value on your goods than to get the price you wish. You'll not find another buyer to give the price I offer.'

Stephen answered cheerily—'I'll try, however, and if I do not succeed will come back to you for the five shillings.'

But the man replied—'Nay, make your bargain now, or I'll have nothing to do with you: but we'll say another shilling to the price, for it is a pretty thing you've got there, and might take somebody's fancy.'

Again Stephen's heart faltered. Ought he to take the man's offer? It would be the least trouble to do so, certainly; and if this money was only to provide a feast, how little either he or his father really cared for that! But, then, had not he, Stephen, undertaken the charge for his father, and did not his love and reverence for that parent oblige him to do the best he could for his honour and profit? It took only a few seconds for these thoughts to course through the boy's mind; and he turned to Mr. Mason, saying, courteously,—

'Do not be hard with me, sir; I am bound to do the best I can in selling this work of my father: but if no customer can be found to give his price, or something near it, I'll take the five shillings you offered me at first.'

'I tell you I'll have nothing more to say to you unless you take my offer now,' answered the man, angrily. 'So away with you, and never expect me to look at your goods again.'

In these last words Stephen recognised a new difficulty. It might be that his father would wish to sell more carvings, and that he would lose an opening for so doing by his son's act of that day; but now a look around confirmed Stephen's first estimate of the man with whom he had been trying to deal. The ornamental goods with which that store was filled were not in good taste, but were of inferior kind. The collection would not be likely to attract customers of any refinement; the dealer also had shown himself cunning and vulgar; it would be no real loss to Mr. Carlton to have this second-rate market finally closed against his beautiful art works. Stephen could not have put this reasoning into words, but his own inherited taste and growing judgment gave him an interpretation of it in feeling. Without another word to the storekeeper, but slightly raising his cap as though to acknowledge that there had been a possibility of favour to him within those walls, the boy went out into the street, and set off for the Exchange.

It was a brisk day amongst the merchants; business was to be concluded early, and a rest of two days to follow. Every one seemed busy and eager, and Stephen, feeling assured that no one had leisure to attend to him, took up his position in a retired corner, and watched the earnest groups of busy men as they debated and bargained with each other.

For two full hours he watched and waited, and then gradually the groups became thinner, and the general interest slacker, and Stephen felt that his opportunity must now be made. Going up bravely to a party of gentlemen, amongst whom he had remarked some benevolent faces, the boy asked modestly if he might be allowed to offer a little treasure which he carried for sale. Looks of surprise were turned on Stephen, and a few of the gentlemen moved away as though annoyed by the interruption. The boy pressed nearer to the kindest looking of the merchants who remained, and repeated his request.

'Not here, my boy, not here,' the gentleman said, quickly; 'the police may be upon you. Goods are

not brought here for sale, and you may be treated as a vagrant."

Poor Stephen! how his heart fell! What was he to do now? And where to go? How could he excuse his conduct to his father if he had to carry the cabinet home again? The boy's countenance had fallen with his hopes, and as he turned anxiously wondering what steps to take next, a hand was laid upon his shoulder. Surely the police were not upon him already! But a glance reassured him, and the kind voice of the gentleman whom he had last addressed greeted his ear.

"Who are you, my boy? and what do you want?" inquired he. "Come with me to Albion Chambers, and we will see if your business can be transacted there," he continued.

And Stephen very gladly accompanied the merchant to his office, answering questions by the way concerning his family and home affairs, but with a becoming reticence which his patron friend knew how to admire.

The cabinet when shown was much admired, and Stephen, on being asked its price, replied that his father had told him to ask ten shillings.

"It is a very beautiful piece of workmanship," the merchant said; "but supposing I am not inclined to give ten shillings for it, what will be the consequence?"

"Then I must try to sell it somewhere else," the boy replied, "or my father will be much displeased. He laid his strict commands upon me not to return with it unsold; but he would allow me to reduce the price if necessary."

But Stephen did not find it necessary to reduce the price. His merchant friend gave him a golden half-sovereign in exchange for the cabinet, and also some cordial words of approval, and then dismissed him with a kindly greeting.

When in the street again, his anxiety allayed, Stephen began to feel tired and hungry. He had had a hurried breakfast, and a long walk, disappointment at the store, and waiting at the Exchange; and now it was long past noon, and he had not tasted food since early morning. Mr. Carlton had given his son a few pence with which to supply himself with luncheon, but these pence were the exact price of a little carving tool which Stephen knew his father wanted, and that the boy had resolved to take him as a Christmas gift. The half-sovereign received for the cabinet he would by no means change, therefore, having bought the desired tool, he set off homeward, still hungry and unrefreshed.

Thoughts of the golden piece he carried, and of the merchant's kindness to him, cheered Stephen effectually for the first half-hour of his return journey, but long before he reached home his feet were weighted by real fatigue, and his body was suffering from actual hunger.

Mr. Carlton met his son on the threshold of their home, and seeing him look tired and hungry, insisted on rest and food being taken before he allowed the boy to give any account of the day's adventures.

And Stephen was heartily glad to rest, and, after taking an ample meal, laid his head upon his father's knees, and slept for two full hours. The light of the short winter day faded quite away, and twilight passed into deep darkness, before Stephen awoke. For those two hours of Stephen's sleep, Mr. Carlton

bore the discomfort of a cramped position, and the weight of his boy's sleeping form, because, being a tender, loving father, he would not disturb his tired child's slumber.

At six o'clock that Christmas Eve good old Margery, the faithful family servant, came to bring lights and tea, and carol singers were at the door sweetly chanting a Christmas hymn.

Stephen, roused by the sounds and lights, awoke, and sprang to his feet, wondering if Christmas Day had already come.

Margery rallied her young master on his sleepiness, for Margery was privileged as faithful servants are wont to be; and Mr. Carlton gently parted the boy's hair from his forehead, and satisfied himself that fatigue had not gone too far.

"Now, Stephen," he said, "over our tea you shall tell me what you have been doing to-day, and why you made me anxious by staying away so long. Margery will wish to go out now, and make some bargains for our to-morrow's fare. What have you received for the cabinet?"

Stephen quietly put the half-sovereign into his father's hand, and then, Margery having received her orders and closed the door, the boy proceeded to give his father an exact and full account of all his adventures of the day, with all his own fears and misgivings.

"And this little tool is my Christmas present to you, father," concluded he. "How I wish I could give you a really handsome Christmas present!"

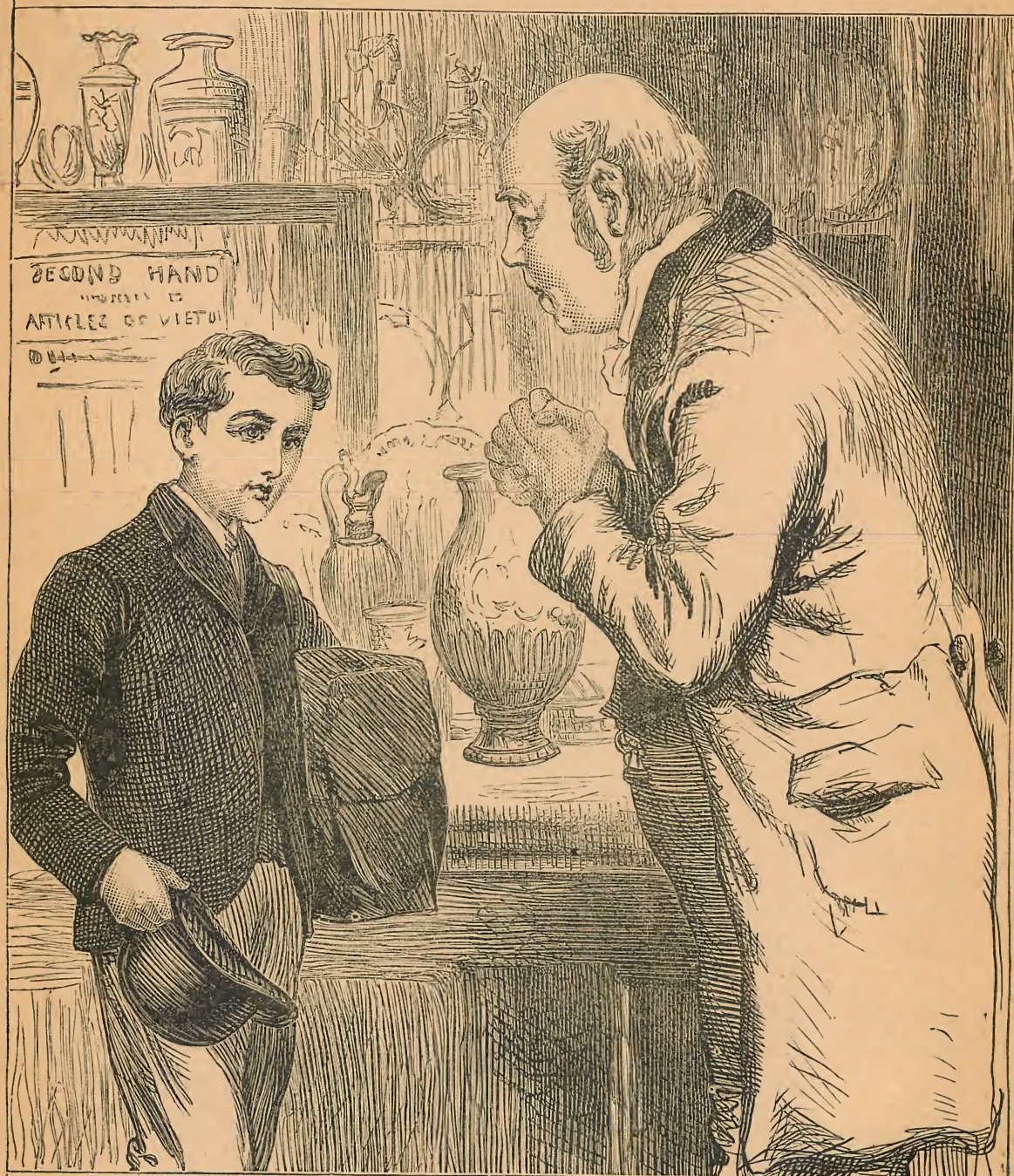
Mr. Carlton's face had been gradually brightening during his son's history of the day, and now it wore a radiant smile. Rising with gentle dignity from his place, he took the boy's hands in both his own and said, tenderly—

"My son, you offer me by your conduct of this day the richest gifts a father's heart can wish. You give me obedience, trust, and love. In obeying me you have shown courage, and enterprise, and perseverance; in honouring me you have given proof of thoughtfulness, and self-denial, and zeal. I am a happy man, to-night, because I find unmistakable proofs of a manly and trustful character in my son. The homely joys of Christmas are great, indeed, for parents when they know that the children gathered around them are loving-hearted and obedient sons and daughters. What better gifts can children offer to their parents than Obedience, Trust, and Love? He who came as at this time to earth came to fulfil His Father's will and to finish His work. What Christmas joy so full to a parent's heart as a reproduction of the Divine pattern in his own family? Stephen, my son, your Christmas offering is a worthy and a precious one. My Christmas joy is great. Thus have we both a Happy Christmas!"

As the carol-singers continued their glad song a new joy sprang up in Stephen's heart—the joy of accepted service, of love given and received, and trust justified. A glimmering of the highest lesson a good earthly father can teach had reached his soul. Henceforth there was a deeper note of joy for him in the words just then ringing in his ears:—

"Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God."

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men." M. C.



Stephen and the Storekeeper.



"Jill, it's me — Jack. Open your eyes."

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 27.)

CHAPTER V.



HOW the boys got across the ravine they never knew. It seemed to Jack that the reverberation of the report was still in his ears and the smoke hanging on the air when he picked Jill up in his arms and saw her face all white, and blood on her frock and sun-bonnet. He never for a moment doubted that she was dead, and already in those few minutes his mind had rushed forward to having to tell his father. Oh, what would he say? How would he bear it? And it was all his (Jack's) fault too, for he had told Mottram to shoot that way, and there was no rabbit there after all, it was all an idiotic joke; he never as long as he lived would do anything in joke again. He never dreamt for a moment that she was still there, of course, but that was no excuse.

And there was Davy sobbing and Mottram standing with his mouth open looking like a fool, and Jack turned on them both fiercely.

'What are you blubbering about, Davy? Can't you get some water for her? I dare say she's not so much hurt. And as for you, Mottram, I should think you had done enough harm for one day without standing there staring like a stuck pig.'

He hardly knew what he was saying, but his words sent both Davy and Mottram charging off down to the stream, and Jack was left alone, sitting among the fern with Jill's head on his arm.

'Oh, Jill!' he whispered close to her ear; 'Jill, it's me—Jack. Open your eyes. I can't go back and tell father that you're—that you've been shot. I couldn't do it. Oh, Jill, come back!'

I think Jack's voice would have followed Jill still further into death's dark valley than that of any one else, much further, certainly, than she had gone now, for she was not really very seriously hurt, and it was more the shock and fright that had made her unconscious than the actual injury; and as Jack's voice sounded close to her ear, she opened her eyes and looked up at him with a little, uncertain, wondering smile.

Davy and Mottram, meanwhile, had quite made friends over the difficulty of getting any water. It is such a pity, in such emergencies as this, that hats are not made water-tight, and even Davy's inside Mottram's only conveyed such a very unsatisfactory quantity up the hill. So Davy made off as fast as he could to the cottage for the kettle while Mottram carried the dripping hats up to Jack, and was generously allowed to help him moisten Jill's hands and face.

Poor Davy suffered from an awkward tendency to faint at the sight of blood, a most unlucky peculiarity in a schoolboy, so when he came back with the kettle full of water, his face grew nearly as ghastly as Jill's, and he almost upset the water he had been at such pains to get, while he tried to help Jack bind up her arm and shoulder with their pocket-handkerchiefs.

'What a duffer you are!' Jack said; 'you'd best get away and let Mottram lend a hand. You cut home as fast as you can and tell nurse about it, and say that we'll bring Jill home as soon as we can.'

Davy did not half like to go, but he was getting so queer that he was not sure that he might not collapse altogether in another minute and add to the difficulties of the situation, so off he went; but had not gone many steps when he met one of the men-servants from the Park, who had been sent out to look after Joe Mottram, as the luncheon-bell had rung long ago, and Mrs. Mottram was beginning to get anxious and to think that some accident must have happened since her son had not returned.

She had, indeed, been in a fidget all the morning, as Joe was her only child! and she had made him a baby as long as possible, and even now that he was getting a big boy would have kept him always tied to her apron-strings if her husband would have allowed it.

But Mr. Mottram was ambitious for Joe; he had not had much education himself, and had made a large fortune in trade, and he was resolved that if money could make a gentleman no money should be spared in making Joe one, every inch of him; and not a cockney gentleman either, but one that could ride and hunt and shoot.

It was principally with this object that he had taken Hill Park for three years, and, as we have seen, the very first morning of their arrival, Joe's education as a country gentleman was begun, under West's instructions; while poor Mrs. Mottram fretted and fidgeted about the house and garden and listened with dreadful misgivings to the sounds of shots in the ravine, and would dearly have liked to go and see for herself that Joey had not hurt himself with that nasty, dangerous gun, if she had not been afraid of her husband's displeasure.

But when luncheon was ready, and no Joey appeared—'And he always so punctual at meals, being a hearty eater from a baby, bless him!'—Mrs. Mottram's anxiety could not be restrained, and she sent out two of the men to scour the place, one of whom came across Davy as he was on his way home from the scene of the accident.

Under Parker's advice they decided to take Jill up to Hill Park, as it was much nearer than Bengrove, or, indeed, than any other house; and as Jill was better by this time, and able to sit up, resting against Jack, and had even declared that in a minute or two she would be able to walk, they resolved to try the move at once. Of course, Jill's walking was quite out of the question, for when she tried to stand the hill-side began to rise and fall, and the trees to turn and curtsy in a bewildering manner; but Jack and Joe, being most nearly of a height, crossed their arms to form what children call a sedan-chair, on which she could sit, with an arm round each boy's neck, pretty comfortably, while Davy cleared the branches and brambles out of the way, and Parker went on to tell what had happened, and to have a carriage got ready to take her home.

Of course he managed to frighten Mrs. Mottram pretty nearly into a fit by the process of what is called 'breaking it' to her, which generally means giving people time to imagine every horror under the

sun, and to fly to conclusions infinitely worse than the reality.

'Don't be frightened, ma'am; but there's been an accident.'

'What is it, Parker? Is he killed?'

'No, ma'am, not killed; and it's a mercy it were no worse, as when young gents gets playing with guns there's no knowing what may happen.'

'Not his eyes, Parker! his lovely eyes! Oh! my boy! to be blind!'

'No, ma'am; his eyes has been spared, and I said I was sure that you and master would wish her to be brought here.'

'Her? Is there some one else hurt?'

'Oh! Master Joe's all right, ma'am, only terrible put about, and no wonder; for if he's not killed the little girl, it's a mercy.'

'What little girl?' asked Mrs. Mottram, with an unrestrainable tone of relief.

'Well, you see, ma'am, it appears that Master Joe met some friends down in the wood, and they was up to their jokes, as young gents will, and they bet he would not hit a little girl who was gathering flowers a little way off: and he ups with his gun, and down comes the little girl, all smothered in blood,' said Parker, who, it will be seen, was not an accurate narrator of facts.

Mrs. Mottram's good-natured face grew almost pale again at the idea of her boy being capable of such cold-blooded cruelty.

'What little girl is it? Is she much hurt? You'd better send one of the stablemen riding for a doctor at once. Why, goodness gracious! it's like murder or manslaughter! But I always told his father those horrid guns were sure to bring him into mischief. Oh, dear! oh, dear!' And so the poor lady went on, working herself up into such a state of agitation that she had almost brought herself to believe that Joe had committed murder, and would be tried for his life, and be hung, and all because his father had given him a gun.

Mr. Mottram, meanwhile, at the first news of the accident, had set off to the scene of action, and met the boys coming up the road carrying Jill; and from them he got the right version of the matter, and found out where Jill and her brothers lived. He would not hear of the child being sent home, though Jill, who had been a good deal tried by the jolting process up from the ravine, sobbed piteously for nurse and father.

But Mr. Mottram certainly was right, for Jill was not fit for any further moving; and when Mrs. Mottram came out to meet them in the hall, and took her from the boys' arms, the child fainted dead away again; and the good lady, who had a kind, motherly heart, carried her straight upstairs into the very best bedroom, which had been prepared for a guest expected to arrive that afternoon, and laid her on the bed. And after Mrs. Mottram had once taken possession of her like that, it would have been a bold person who would have proposed to remove her.

So when Jill opened her eyes again, instead of Jack's anxious and rather dirty face bending over her, with a background of fern and blue sky, which she had seen when she first recovered her consciousness after the accident; and instead of her dear little,

shabby old bedroom at home, where every crack in the ceiling and stain of damp on the walls had some friendly association, where her eyes had opened every morning ever since she could remember; she was in a great, soft, strange bed, hung round with lovely blue curtains and white lace; and Mr. Wilson, the doctor, was doing something to her arm, which was very sore and painful, and he was saying, cheerfully, 'Well, Miss Jill, there's not so much amiss with you after all; and here's a fine place to be nursed in! I'm afraid you won't be in a hurry to get well.'

Mr. Wilson had attended Jill when she had the measles two years before, and he came sometimes to see Mr. Flower; so Jill knew him quite well, and his face was the only thing not strange; and she pulled his sleeve gently as he turned away, and whispered something about wanting to go home to father.

'Oh! come now! you must be a good little girl, and keep still; and I'll send nurse up to see after you. It's very kind of Mrs. Mottram to let you stop here. There, there! you must not fret. I shall go in and see Mr. Flower on my way back, and tell him you're going on all right, and will be soon running about and plaguing him again. Shall I take any message for him from you?'

'Yes; tell him, please, I'm very well, and not to trouble about sending nurse. You see,' said Jill, with bright eyes and the colour coming up into her cheeks, 'she does the cooking, and they can't spare her. And tell Davy, please, to see that father has his tea—and it's two lumps he likes, and not too much milk; and they won't let the front door bang more than they can help, will they?'

(To be continued.)

AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

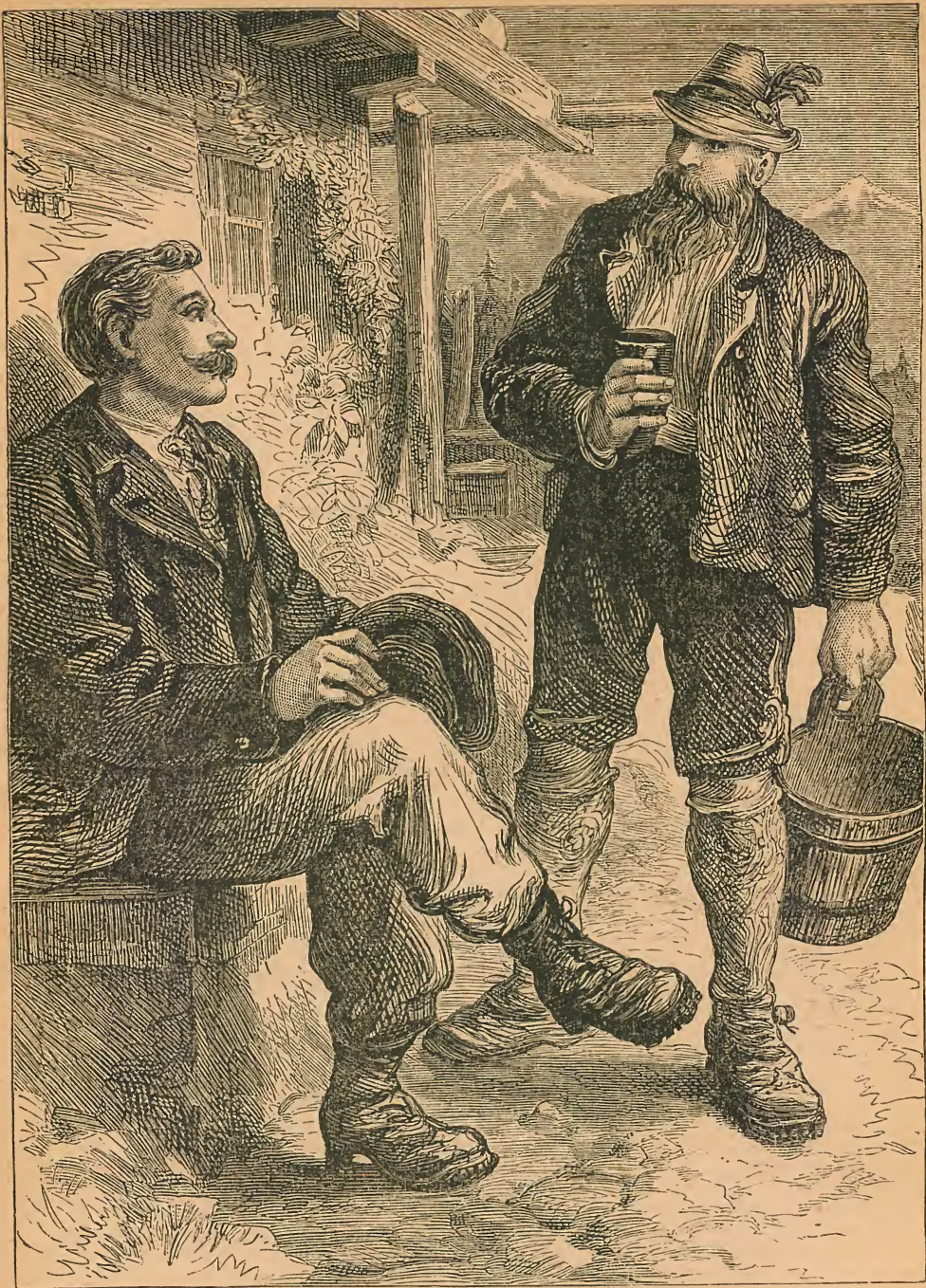


THE traveller, climbing the Swiss mountains in summer, may find much to envy in the life of the hardy peasant families at whose picturesque chalets he meets always with a hearty welcome.

The chalet itself is usually a very attractive little abode, with its overhanging roof covered with wooden tiles, and its balcony well protected

from the rain by the broad eaves. In the warm summer months the Swiss peasants live as much as possible out of doors, and the chalets upon the higher slopes of the mountains, which are inhabited only in the hot weather, are neither so large nor so comfortable as those in the villages lower down. Still, standing as they do upon the green pasture lands, with the snowy heights rising above them, the little brown dwellings look very quaint and pretty, and make one think that a few weeks might be pleasantly spent under their shelter.

The master of the house, if he is at home, will gladly give us a seat beside his door; and, while we rest our tired feet and enjoy the magnificence of the



Up in the Mountains of Switzerland.

view spread out before us, he will endeavour to interest and amuse us with an account of his daily life, which, after all, has its shady side as well as its sunny side. He has no time to be idle, though he will not grudge the half-hour spent in entertaining his visitor.

He has his cattle and his hay to look after, and the summer on these mountain-slopes is all too short. His mind is full of business, and the grandeur of the snow-crowned peaks, the beauty of the dark pine forests, and the delicate loveliness of the Alpine



Swiss Peasant in Winter.

flowers which cover the meadows and bloom even on the chilly edge of the glacier, seem to be quite lost upon him. He has seen them every day since he was born, and he thinks no more of them than we do of our English hills, and woodlands, and the buttercups and daisies which brighten our fields with their silver and gold. But to us everything is new and strange, and we fancy that our eyes could never grow weary of gazing on the varied beauties of a Swiss landscape.

What is that low, rumbling sound? We turn hastily, and our friend points to a spot in the distance, where something like a cloud is rolling down the steep slope. It is an avalanche. Well for us that we are not clambering up that mountain, or we *might* be lost for ever beneath the weight of

snow! Often, as our friend tells us, the avalanche brings not only snow but rocks and stones with it, and in its rapid descent it overwhelms and sweeps away the solitary chalets, and even entire villages.

Where are his cattle? we ask.

Oh, the lads and little Marie are up yonder with them. As high as the grass can be found the cattle must be driven, and then, as Winter steps downwards from his throne, the herds are brought lower, until at last they return to the valleys, where they remain through the gloomy months of frost and snow.

And the good man himself, how does he spend the winter? Not in idleness we may be sure. It is in the long quiet evenings that he finds time to bring out his knife and his bits of wood, and to carve the

curious toys and ornaments, for which he will find a ready sale when summer comes again.

It is a free and wholesome life which he leads, and, in spite of its hardships (which are greater than the travellers who visit him only in the pleasant summer days can imagine), he enjoys it, and he would be very unwilling to exchange it for any other. H. L. T.

RICHARD CROMWELL IN COURT.

WHEN the great Protector's son was about eighty years old, he was brought up to London as a witness in a civil suit. At the trial, the counsel for the opposite side had the cruelty to revile the old man on the score of his father's conduct. But the presiding judge, with better feeling, rebuked the counsel, and caused the old man to be provided with a seat.

Whilst at Westminster, Richard Cromwell went into the House of Lords. His presence becoming known, Lord Bathurst entered into conversation with the ex-Protector, and asked him when he had last been in that house.

'Never, my lord,' was the reply, 'since I sat in that chair,' pointing to the throne. A. R. B.



TELL.

ONE bright morning in December a knot of laughing boys were hurrying along the streets of Halifax, the chief town of Nova Scotia.

From the satchels on their backs you could see that they were on their way to school; but by the look of eager excitement in their faces, it seemed as if some keener pleasure than lessons was in prospect.

Besides, they had with them a few 'coasters': these are long flat pieces of wood on runners, on which boys in Canada sit or lie, whilst they slide down a frozen hill or street.

The sky was deep blue, and the sea so bright that it seemed wonderful that, instead of melting the thick white snow, it only made it glitter like diamonds; and as the pleasant, crunching sound was heard under the boys' feet, they knew that the frost was as hard as ever. Presently they came in sight of the signal station, which is situated at the top of a hill in front of the artillery barracks.

This hill looked that morning like a huge conical cake covered with frosted sugar; the masts for the signals on the summit were clearly defined against the cloudless sky, and the figure of the sentry on duty looked in the distance almost as small as if it had been taken out of a box of toys. The cheerful jingle of the bells of the scarlet and many-coloured sleighs passing to and fro along the road at the bottom of the hill filled the air with a merry sound, and added to the pleasure of a Canadian winter morning. The boys soon shouted with delight as they neared the tempting slopes. They ran past the large school-house, the door of which was still closed, and began

their coasting operations on a steep inclined street near by.

In London people would be alarmed to see their roads made still more slippery by this practice of sliding down them, but in Halifax coasting is considered one of the legitimate pleasures of boys of all ages. Now and then an officer in uniform passed by on his way to the barracks, and smiled to himself at the energy of the youngsters. Well-balancing themselves, down they came full swing from the top to the bottom of the street; but to enjoy the same pleasure again, they had to toil up the icy road, dragging the coasters behind them by pieces of string.

The boys were all warmly clad, and a pretty colouring was given to the scene by the many-coloured woollen caps worn by those who had not fur ones.

Two of the boys were soon engaged in a hot discussion as to who was entitled to the next run on the coaster, which was their joint property. One was a fine, tall, strong lad of fourteen, his lithe figure looking well in his closely-fitting suit of dark brown cloth; a round fur cap was jauntily set on his curly head, his eyes were kind and blue, and he had a well-formed face, but there was an expression of weakness about his mouth which made one doubtful how he would fare in a sharp test of real moral strength.

The other boy was far more delicate. He was slightly built, thin and small for twelve years old, and his finely cut features showed a sensitive disposition.

His father had named him Tell after the Swiss hero whom Schiller has immortalised. The little fellow's cheeks were now aflame with indignation as he said to his brother, 'You know you promised, David, that I should have a run after you, and you have already had two. You ought to keep your word.'

'What right have you to dictate to me?' asked David, hotly; 'I shall do what I like. Remember that I am older than you, so get out of the way.'

Tell's heart swelled within him at the unkind words of his brother. He knew he was only a little fellow, much inferior to big David; but then David had always been so good to him, and helped him with the rough games, in which otherwise he would not have been able to join, and he had never spoken so unkindly before.

Tell would have better understood the reason of his brother's bad temper, if he had heard the conversation which had taken place at the foot of the hill, when David had been jeered at because he could not promise to join in the purchase of a toboggan, his father having no money to spare, as his wife had been ailing for a long time. But not having heard this discussion amongst the boys, Tell felt wounded at his brother's conduct, and had to turn his back to hide the tears which would fill his large brown eyes.

'I say, little 'un, what's the matter?' said a good-natured big boy.

'Nothing,' was Tell's prompt reply.

'But I know there is,' rejoined the other. At that moment David returned, already regretting his unkindness, and coming to offer his brother the coaster which he had behind him. Unfortunately the big

boy prevented the reconciliation which would then have taken place between the boys, by saying impetuously, 'You are a mean fellow, David; here, you have had all these runs, and poor little Tell is nearly crying with cold!'

David instantly thought that Tell had been complaining of him, and he turned round to give back an angry retort; but at that moment nine o'clock struck from the signal station, and the big boy was already rushing along to the school-house. There was a helter-skelter up the steps into the vestibule, from which the boys had to go down a stone staircase into the schoolroom.

David was all the time feeling very bitter against poor little Tell, whose brown head he could see just one step in front of him. To have been spoken to like that by a boy of the first form just because he could not wait a moment for him! He was also feeling anxious to be at his desk before his name was called, so when he saw Tell stop a moment he gave him a hasty push.

The reason of Tell's momentary hesitation was that a piece of matting had caught in his foot, and to David's unspeakable horror his hasty action precipitated his brother to the bottom of the flight of steps. When the boys pushed anxiously down to where he lay, and turned the little fellow on his back, they started with fright when they saw that he was senseless, and that blood was trickling from an ugly wound in his forehead.

Hearing a noise, the Rector, who was also head-master of the High School, rose from his desk in the class-room, where he was waiting for his pupils, and came out to see what was the matter. He was a man of middle height, dressed in a long black cassock with a girdle round his waist; his hair and beard were white, his face thin and rather worn, and through his golds pectacles it could be seen that his eyes were keen, bright, kind, and sympathetic.

At his approach, the boys made way for him to see poor Tell. The sight of the little fellow lying pale and senseless on the stone floor filled him with anxiety, and he said that a doctor must be sent for immediately.

David, with a throbbing at his head and an aching fear at his heart, rushed once again into the bright sunshine and snow. All the world seemed changed, and he felt as if he had the stamp of murder on his brow.

Fortunately a doctor lived near, and soon returned in a sleigh with him. At one glance he saw that the fall had given Tell concussion of the brain, and he said that he must be taken home directly. The Rector kindly said that he would go with them to break the news to the father and mother.

During the drive David sat speechless with anxiety, gazing on the deathlike face of Tell, who was supported by the doctor. Soon he became aware that the Rector was speaking to him; but the voice seemed to come from a long way off. The boy, dry-eyed and pale, his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth, turned to the Rector, who took his hand and said, 'You must not be too unhappy, David; it is a thing which might have happened to anybody. I dare say some snow under Tell's boot made him slip.'

In one instant these words showed David the unlooked-for possibility of relief from the fear which paralysed him of confessing his share in the accident.

'Why,' whispered Temptation, 'was it necessary for him to say anything about that little push? Why should he brave his father's anger, and perhaps his mother's reproaches, when these simple words of the Rector would give an explanation without condemning him?'

The jingling of the sleigh-bells now ceased, and they were once more at the home door, from which it now seemed years since Tell and he had run off so happily that morning.

The Doctor and the Rector carried the little fellow into the first room on the ground floor, and David went to fetch his mother.

He found her teaching his younger sister in the back-room, and as she looked up from the child's copy-book it struck her son how pale and thin her face was; and when he thought of the dreadful news that he was bringing her, his heart failed him, and to his mother's anxious question as to what was the matter he could only say, 'Tell is in the next room.'

Mrs. Sutherland then pushed back the folding-doors and saw her boy on the sofa with his head bound up, and the Rector and the Doctor standing beside him. David was in such a state of nervous excitement that he did not dare to hear what she would say, but stood with his hands pressed over his ears just inside the back-room.

In a few minutes he saw his mother pass quickly by, looking a shade paler than usual, but evidently having summoned all her strength and presence of mind so as to be of use. Tell was soon in bed, and after ice had been put on his head the Doctor and the Rector left the house, promising to come again in the afternoon.

David crept away utterly miserable to his own little bedroom; and, with his burning forehead pressed against the frosted window-pane, he repeated to himself so often his reasons for not telling about that fatal push, that by the time the bell rang for dinner he was quite persuaded that silence was the best and only course for him to pursue.

His father was already at the table when he entered the dining-room. 'Well, David,' he said, 'this is a dreadful thing about Tell. The Rector said his foot slipped; can you tell us anything more about it?'

David had no answer ready for such a direct question, so he took refuge in a lie. After the 'No' had been uttered and accepted by the father, who was really too anxious about the present condition of his son to care much about how the fall had happened, David felt as if a gulf had opened behind him which nothing could bridge over, and that now he was in an unknown land of deception, where he would have to plod unaided and alone through bogs and morasses of deceit.

The hours passed very slowly to David. At any time illness in the house is a trying time for children. They can be of no use to the patient, the mother is generally upstairs attending to the sick one, and so the house becomes dull and the meals irregular.

(To be continued.)



"I say, little 'un, what's the matter?"



The Pilot's Wife.

THE PILOT'S WIFE.

IT was the last night of the year
 (A night of wind and rain),
 I sat and mused upon the Past,
 While o'er the sea the furious blast
 Came rattling on my pane.

My dull red fire was burning low
 (But 'twas enough for me).
 Ah! if my own good man were here!
 I'd bring another log to cheer
 The face so dear to me.

But two long nights had passed away
 Since Will had left my side;
 He was a Pilot, so you know
 I had perforce to let him go
 Whatever might betide.

He called across the rippling wave
 'Farewell, my dear, farewell;
 While I? I watched the little boat
 Across the gleaming waters float
 With fears I could not tell.

For I had dreamed a fearful dream,
 I saw my Willie lie
 All drenched and dead upon the shore,
 While waves were beating evermore
 Beneath a leaden sky.

I did not tell my own good man,
 He would have laughed at me;
 'Are you a Pilot's wife,' he'd say,
 'And weep to see me sail away
 Upon a tranquil sea?'

He went to fetch a good ship home
 (The ship was due at Leith),
 For well my Willie knew the coast,
 Each rock and headland tempest-tossed,
 From Berwick to Inch-Keith.

But oh, the awful winter storm
 That blew that dreadful night!
 Where was the ship? and where was Will?
 I weeping paced the floor until
 There dawned the morning light.

It found me kneeling by my bed,
 All trembling for my Will;
 Oh, how I prayed that the good God,
 Who sent those sweeping winds abroad,
 Would speak the words, 'Be still!'

'Twas then, just at the first faint dawn,
 Of this so glad New Year,
 The storm rolled onwards to the west,
 The weary waves sank down to rest.
 And Willie? he was here!

I gathered up the dying brands,
 My fire was soon a-glow;
 And, as I met his smiling eyes,
 No heart beneath these new-year skies
 Was glad like mine, I know!

D. B. McKEAN.

TELL.

(Continued from page 39.)



DAVID was glad when the hour came for him to go to Mr. Stone, the curate, who was kind enough to help him and his brother every day to prepare their lessons for school.

He ran quickly along the streets, trying, with the pleasant feeling of exercise, to drown the voice of conscience. He

soon arrived at the curate's home, which was a little house turning out of the main street where the Cathedral is. The landlady was a kind old woman, who was very pleased to have a 'clergy,' as she called him, for a lodger, and so she let him put aside her own furniture, and arrange his sitting-room in an æsthetic fashion. Sage-green hangings adorned the fire-place, peacock feathers, blrushes, brackets, sketches, and bookcases had transformed the common little back-room into an artistic-looking study. When David entered he found that Mr. Stone was not at home, but he knew that the curate would expect him to await his return, so he threw himself into the comfortable arm-chair in front of the fire-place, fully enjoying the warmth after the outside cold.

As he leaned back and crossed his legs, as he had seen Mr. Stone do, and looked lazily about, his eyes fell upon an open lesson-book which Tell had left there yesterday, and then it occurred to him that having been so selfishly absorbed in his own anxiety about the accident, he had almost forgotten how dreadful it was for his brother. He began to realise that he was so seriously ill that perhaps he would never be well again. Could it be that they would never more learn their lessons together? Would Tell really be deprived of joining in all the cheerful winter sports? What would he not give to see his dear little face as he had seen it only yesterday, with the brown eyes shining with delight as he sat at the other side of the fire-place listening to his brother's account of the pleasures of tobogganing? Had he with that fatal push, perhaps, wrecked little Tell's life? His face became burning hot at the dreadful thought, and a lump rose in his throat; then, overwrought with all he had gone through, his self-command entirely gave way, he bowed his head in his hands and burst into a fit of uncontrollable sobs.

At that moment there was the sound of opening and shutting the street-door, and the curate came upstairs, humming the air of one of the Christmas carols. He was really happy in the prospect of David and Tell's company for the afternoon. Boys were his one pleasure. Far away from his home, and caring little for the society around, he enjoyed the company of these bright boys. And for David he had an especial affection. He seemed to see in him the prospect of a noble, clever man; and he always listened gladly to the day-dreams of the

lad as they found a sympathetic echo in his own heart.

Mr. Stone was a tall, well-built young man, with a closely cut black beard and moustache. His rough coat and astrakan cap were now sprinkled with snow, and his eyes and cheeks were bright with exercise as he entered the room. When he saw David bowed down with weeping, he went up to him and laid his hand kindly on his shoulder; and it cut him to the heart when he saw the distressed and tear-stained face which was turned up to meet his.

Mr. Stone took the boy on his knee, and soon the sobs became quieter, and David was able to attend to his anxious question as to what was the matter. 'It's Tell! it's Tell! what shall I do?' said the poor boy.

'Let me hear all about it,' replied the curate kindly.

David felt as if he must relieve his overburdened mind by confessing all; but then came the thoughts, 'What is the use of my telling? Perhaps Mr. Stone will be angry with me, and will never speak to me again? It will not make Tell any better now.' So, for the second time David fell into the temptation, and broken with sobs came the account of the accident without any mention of his own share in it. Besides feeling sorry for the boy's trouble, Mr. Stone was sad himself to think of his little pupil's misfortune. Gradually David became quiet and composed, and when tea was brought in he was sitting by the fire, looking over a book of photographic views; his face pale, but comforted by the sympathy of his kind friend; the gnawing feeling of anxiety and reproach not weighing so heavily on his heart. David belonged to the choir of the Cathedral, where Mr. Stone was curate, so when it was nearly seven o'clock they went to church together, as there was to be service that evening.

As the boy took his seat in the chancel with his white-robed companions he keenly missed his brother, who always sat next to him. According to a service, arranged by the Rector for the purpose, the induction of a choir-boy was a solemn and trying ordeal. The child, in his new surplice, had to kneel before the clergyman at the chancel steps, and there make promises of sincerity and good behaviour before he is admitted. It was only a few Sundays ago that Tell, in the presence of a large congregation at the evening service, had joined as a chorister.

David recollected how, when he had seen the little surpliced figure of his brother kneeling alone before the clergyman at the steps of the chancel, his heart had been moved with affection and sympathy; and when, on taking his seat next to him, Tell had slipped a cold little hand into his, David had joined earnestly in the prayer that the new chorister might have strength to keep his vows, in his own mind determining to do all he could to help him.

Tears now filled David's eyes, and he was glad that the prayers going on enabled him to hide his face, as he thought that perhaps he would never hear again that clear ringing voice at his side, and all because he had given that fatal push. The burden of his secret was being felt again, and under the sweet influence of the service, and the naturally good impulses of his heart, he almost determined to confess it all. But David's nature was weak, and by the time he had

taken off his surplice he had succumbed for the third time to the temptation of keeping silence.

A few days went by; Tell was very ill. The fall had affected his brain. The doctor looked grave, and the parents nursed the little patient night and day. They were also anxious to see that David seemed to grow paler and thinner every day, while he was very impatient if any remarks were made about his appearance.

Mr. Stone often sat up with Tell during the night, so as to let the father have time to rest, and when he was having breakfast at his lodgings before going to morning service, David used to come in on his way to school to go over his lessons again before class time.

It made the curate quite anxious to see how Tell's illness seemed to weigh upon his young friend's mind. He would often make the boy eat his own dish of porridge, whilst he went over the French or Latin task. Then he kindly lent him his skates, which were not much too large for him, so that the lad should have distraction in that exercise; and as Christmas was approaching he was thinking of buying him a toboggan, a possession which David in his most hopeful day-dreams never expected to have.

In our interest in David we must not forget Kathleen, his little sister. She sorely missed her brother Tell; and when she found that he was too ill for her to go in and play with him, she pined for his society. One day Mr. Stone found her crying on the stairs. It seemed that she had dressed up her favourite doll, and placed it inside Tell's bedroom door, thinking it could not fail to interest him; but to her distress she found that he took no notice of it. Mr. Stone felt sorry for the little girl, and when he had been in to see the patient, who was still very ill, he took Kathleen with him to St. Luke's schoolroom, where ladies were busy preparing the Christmas decorations for the Cathedral. There the child was very much cheered, for everybody was very kind to her, and they told her that they wanted her help. She ran backwards and forwards to the large heap of spruce in the corner, filling her pinafore with the green branches, which she took to the groups of people sitting round the stove, busily covering the staves of wood which were required for the reredos. Every now and then the door opened, and a black man or woman came in to say that more spruce had been brought, and the glistening heap all covered with snow was carried in.

So Christmas Eve broke over Halifax. This had hitherto always been a cheerful festival for Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland, now they were very unhappy. David was restless, and looking very haggard. He avoided his parents as much as possible, and in his inquiries for his brother showed an irritable impatience at his non-improvement, for the doctor still thought him in danger.

Little Kathleen pined for Tell, and her natural childlike sleep had given way to feverish dreams and bad nights. On the previous Sunday Tell had been prayed for in church, and Mr. Stone noticed how pale David turned when the Rector said to the boys at the catechising class, that probably they would never see again amongst them one who was loved by them all.



Mr. Stone laid his hand kindly on David's shoulder.

All day, in spite of the streets being covered with ice, and a continued fall of snow, people were eagerly running to and fro to the prettily-arranged and well-lighted shops, bringing out and stowing away under the buffalo robes of the sleighs interesting looking brown-paper parcels.

All the decorations had been put up in the Cathedral, and at seven o'clock there was evening service, concluding with a beautiful selection of

carols. The church looked its very best, with the tastefully arranged and many coloured banners, gold-lettered texts on crimson grounds, a cleverly designed reredos covered with spruce, and quantities of flowers. The Bishop and Rector officiated, and with the chancel filled with the surpliced choristers, who, with their ringing voices, sang one carol after another, it was a natural and beautiful prelude to Christmas.

(Concluded in our next.)



WAITING FOR AN ARRIVAL.

O H, how I do wish that my cousin would come!
I'd lend him my paint-box, my top, and my
drum;

I'm so glad he can stay all the holidays here,
For winter is really the best of the year.

I never have seen him—he lives far away,
So, of course, he'll be shy for at least half-a-day;
But he'll soon feel at home with the rest of us
boys,
And won't we have plenty of laughing and noise!

The frost is delightful; we'll slide and we'll skate,
And rush round the pond at a glorious rate.
I think I hear wheels! I must run out and see;
Oh, yes! there he comes, and he's smiling to me!

D. B. MCKEAN.

CRICKET-FIELD STORIES.

ONE day, while we were waiting our turns to go to the wicket, some of our fellows began telling stories. One of them said, 'Well, I can beat you all in the matter of runs. I was once playing in a match, and I made a tremendous hit. The ball went clean through the window of a public-house which adjoined the ground, and pitched into a pewter pot from which a man was drinking his beer. The fielders rushed into the public-house and got the pot, but as for the ball it was stuck fast in it, and no efforts could extract it. They could not cry lost ball, for there it was all the time in their hands. Meanwhile we ran like mad. Forty-nine runs did we score off that lucky hit. But just as we were going to make the fiftieth a happy thought struck one of the men. Seizing the pot he rushed out on the ground, and clapped it bottom upwards on the stumps. Didn't the fellows shout!'

This story brought forth another. 'Well, I once made a queer hit,' said a man who was sitting near me. 'The ball took a high flight, and coming down stuck in one of the pipes leading from the roof of the pavilion to the ground. Some of the fellows were up the pipe in no time: but they could not get the ball. There it was in full sight. A bright thought struck one of them. He slid down and, seizing a cheese from the luncheon-table, he was back before the others knew what he was about. He stuffed the cheese down the pipe and effectually hid the ball. We had only made six runs when they called "Lost ball!"'

AN UNFORTUNATE NAME.

CHARLES II. was much troubled with the number of people who waited on him with petitions, and at last he ordered them to cease. Soon afterwards came a man from Taunton with another petition.

'Sir,' said the angry king, how dare you deliver me such a paper?'

'Sir,' said the petitioner, 'my name is Dare.'

He paid for his conduct and his answer by fine and imprisonment.

A. R. B.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 35.)

CHAPTER VI.



ALTHOUGH Jill's hurt was not by any means severe or dangerous, she was so feverish for two or three days that the doctor would not consent to her going home, but advised that she should remain at Hill Park and be kept very quiet. This advice was no doubt partly due to his knowing what a very rough-and-ready thing nursing at Bengrove was likely to be at

the hands of nurse and the boys, however loving and anxious they might be, and how small the means for

getting comforts and luxuries where even necessities were not always easy to provide.

'And besides,' he said to himself, 'if that young idiot of a Mottram shot the child, the least thing they can do is to get her well again.' But you may be sure that Mr. Wilson kept this view of the subject to himself, as the Mottrams were likely to prove valuable patients, and he felt quite grateful to Jill for having given him an introduction to Hill Park, which had always, hitherto, been attended by a doctor from Woodleigh.

To do the Mottrams justice, nothing could exceed their kindness and anxiety to make all the amends in their power for the catastrophe. Mr. Mottram went fussing and fuming down to Bengrove to explain to Mr. Flower how it had happened. It would have been the greatest relief to the warm-hearted little man if circumstances would have allowed of his making compensation in money for the accident, and, indeed, hearing from Mr. Wilson that Mr. Flower was not very well off, he put a little bundle of bank-notes in his pocket, and as he came up to the shabby, dilapidated house, and was shown into the poorly-furnished dining-room, he fingered the notes several times, and hoped the arrangement would be pretty plain sailing. But the moment Mr. Flower came into the room, even though his coat was threadbare and his boots decidedly the worse for wear, Mr. Mottram saw that the offer of money would not do here, and left the notes to themselves.

Mrs. Mottram devoted herself entirely to Jill, and was so kind and motherly that the child, who had never known a mother's love, took to her at once, and felt quite ashamed of herself for remembering Jack's description of her as having a face like an apple-pudding with cloves for eyes.

As for poor Joe, he suffered agonies of remorse and compunction for what he had done, and hung about in the passage outside Jill's room with his mouth hanging open in abject despondency, questioning every one who passed in or out as to how she was, and whether she was going to die; and when Mr. Mottram brought back Mr. Flower with him, Joe fled to his bedroom and locked himself in to hide from the wrath that he felt sure Jill's father must feel against his daughter's murderer; and nothing would induce him to come out till his mother came herself and assured him that Mr. Flower had gone, and that Jill wanted very much to see him by-and-by when she woke up.

'Why, Gilly Flower,' Mr. Flower said when he came into the large, airy room, with a big bow-window looking over the park; 'you are quite in the lap of luxury here!'

And a little, dark, curly head and pale face started up from among the pillows at the sound of his voice, and one arm was stretched out to get round his neck as the other was bandaged up and in a sling, and she answered, 'I'd rather be in *your* lap, daddy.'

'Ah! that's a very different thing to the lap of luxury, Gilly Flower,' he answered. 'Now you're to be still and quiet the doctor says, and I'm going to sit here with you for half an hour, if you can make room for me in the lap of luxury. No, I'm not tired, for Mr. Mottram was kind enough to drive me up in his carriage, and he is going to send me back again by-

and-by; and when I go nurse will come up and sleep with you to-night, so as not to trouble the kind people here more than we can help. Now, don't worry your little head as to how we shall get on. Davy and Jack have not left me alone for five minutes since they came in; first one comes creeping in (and if it's Jack, knocks over half-a-dozen things in trying to keep quiet) and pulls down the blind, and then the other comes to draw it up again; and they insisted on my having a cup of tea before I came away, though it was boiling hot, and I scalded my mouth knowing that Mr. Mottram was waiting, and they sent all sorts of messages about the feeding of various animals. Mary Ann is delighted at the chance of showing how much better she can do everything when nurse is not by to find fault with her.'

Jill did not feel at all satisfied at being on that great soft sofa heaped up with cushions, drawn up into the window so that she could look out at the smooth grassy slopes of the park and the clumps of dark elms in their thick summer foliage, and feel the soft air that came in stirring the lace curtains and bearing the delicious scents of flowers from the gardens under the windows. But father declared that nothing could be more comfortable than the large arm-chair drawn up by the side of the sofa; and he took up the large white feather fan that Mrs. Mottram had left on the table, and fanned himself and Jill gently.

It needs to have been ill oneself to know just what ill people like, and Mr. Flower had had plenty of personal experience. If he had sat upright on a cane chair and spoken in whispers, and jerked the fan in laborious efforts for Jill's comfort, the little girl would have been miserable, but now she was satisfied that he was resting, and was cool too, and something in the soft movement of the fan was very soothing, and father did not talk much; and presently, to her great surprise and a little vexation, she found that she had been sound asleep, and that father had gone and the sun was setting behind the elms.

There was a great jar of beautiful roses on the table near her, cream and crimson, white and pink, and a plate of great ripe strawberries; and some kind friend had evidently been ransacking the house for things for her amusement, for there was a great heap of illustrated papers and books close at hand. It was all so pretty, and nice, and comfortable; and yet this silly little Jill, waking up for the first time in her life in the lap of luxury, could not keep the tears out of her eyes, and was preparing to bury her head in the pillows and be miserable, when a very familiar sound struck on her ear, which might have been the most enchanting music by the way in which Jill's face cleared directly, and her head popped up to look in the direction in which the sound came. Yes, there was no mistaking the creaking of nurse's stays: there she was, as large as life, unpacking a very well-known shabby little black bag, reflected from head to foot in the large mirror in the wardrobe—a very clumsy, out-of-place figure among all the elegant surroundings, but imparting a most consoling feeling of home to Jill's mind; and when nurse discovered a hole in one of Jill's garments and held it up with her usual 'tut-tut-tut' of disapproval, Jill could not restrain a laugh of satisfaction and relief, it was so natural.

It was not quite so natural, however, when nurse

came to the side of the sofa and made much of her, and cried and laughed over her; but it was very pleasant all the same, and Jill got almost too excited at nurse's descriptions of what she had seen of the house when she arrived; of the kitchen and the smart servants, and the dinner-table set out in, what appeared to nurse, regal magnificence of plate, and glass, and fruit, and flowers; of the dresses of some ladies of whom she had caught a glimpse on their way to dinner; and of Mrs. Mottram's diamonds, when she came into the room while Jill was still asleep.

'A lot of company came this afternoon, and this was one of the rooms they was to have; but Mrs. Mottram wouldn't hear of your being moved, not if it were for the queen herself, as was a good, kind-hearted lady as ever breathed; but not a bit more than she did ought to, after pretty near killing you. And, after all, you've more right here than most folks, as ought to have had Hill Park if you'd had your rights; and so I said to myself when I see master drive off with Mr. Mottram, looking every inch a gentleman, only I wish he'd put on his best coat or let me give him a brush down afore he started. Why, even the coachman, as brought master home and fetched me up here, noticed what a gentleman master looks; and he ain't a bad judge he tells me, as have never driven less than a baronet or a heart afore he came to Mr. Mottram, and he didn't half like it.'

But just then nurse was called away to have some supper, and Mrs. Mottram brought in Joe to say good-night.

'Joe wants you to say you're not angry with him, and you don't think he did it on purpose,' Mrs. Mottram said.

Joe was in evening dress, with a white tie, and his face was furiously red with shyness and dinner, and his ears stuck out and seemed to Jill more prominent than ever. He had to be pulled and pushed into the room, and looked so ridiculous altogether, standing with his toes turned in and his mouth open, that Jill could not help laughing, the sound of which seemed to be a great relief to him.

'Oh, I say!' he said, 'then you're not so awfully bad! I didn't think you'd be able to laugh. Your brothers, you know, are such fellows to laugh, and they're always at it, and I suppose you're the same. They always make fun of me, but I don't mind it, and I shan't mind anything as long as you get all right again. I'm so awfully sorry, you know! I've been fit to kill myself all the afternoon. There's nothing I wouldn't do to make you well. Isn't there anything you want? Don't girls always like dolls? I'll go and fetch you one the very first thing to-morrow if it's too late to-night. Don't you care for dolls? That's a bore! I've no sisters, you know, so I don't know what girls like a bit.'

But Jill was getting very tired by this time, and Mrs. Mottram whisked Joe away when Jill had assured him that she was not a bit angry with him.

But a very feverish night followed, with strange, confused dreams of 'Luxury' having big ears like Midas and creaking stays like nurse, and that, after all, it was very hot being all night in any lap, and that it would have been cooler and easier to sleep, and less puzzling, in bed at home.

(To be continued.)



Nurse discovering a Hole in Jill's Garments.



The Little Circus Boy.

THE LITTLE CIRCUS BOY.

THE Circus door was opening wide, the people
 A crowding in,
 With many a jostling push, intent a better place to
 win;
 The flaring gas burnt high, and shone on walls all
 tinsel bright,
 And on the faces fair and young that gathered there
 that night.

For this was Christmas-time, you see, the snow was
 falling fast,
 Though in the Circus no one felt the keen and bitter
 blast;
 Their feet impatient beat the boards, so eager for the
 show,
 And anxious eyes were turned upon the curtain
 hanging low.

Meanwhile, beyond the flaring gas, the glitter, and
 the gold,
 Within a squalid tent there lay, all shivering with
 cold,
 A woman, young and fair, but worn with grief and
 constant pain
 (Her place within the circus-ring she'll never fill
 again).

The clown was standing by her bed, and tears were
 in his eyes,
 The ghastly pallor of his face was seen through all
 disguise;
 While Jim, the little circus boy, all decked in gold
 and green,
 Said, 'Mother, 'tis the fullest house that ever we
 have seen.'

'I do not feel the least afraid, so cheer up, mother
 dear,
 And when my task is done I'll come and sit beside
 you here.
 Poor mother! don't you feel it hard to lie alone
 in bed?'
 But she beckoned to the clown to come, and
 whispering low, she said:

'Oh, Walter, tell me, is it safe? my boy, he is so
 young,
 You'll stay beside him all the time, and when the
 rope is flung,
 You'll help the darling, Walter? I know you love
 him well;
 But, oh, a dying mother's love, what mortal tongue
 can tell!'

And now the curtain slowly rose . . . with eager,
 happy look,
 The rosy children clapped their hands until the
 building shook;
 While little Jim, so gaily dressed, stepped forward
 with a bow,
 They chalk his shoes, and stretch the cord, and
 whisper, 'Courage, now!'

He swung himself upon the rope, and turned and
 twisted round,
 The band struck up, his tiny feet went dancing to
 the sound;
 While close beneath him all the time, with eager,
 anxious eye,
 The clown kept watch, with laughing face, and heart
 of agony.

Until, a sudden darkness came, his heart refused to
 beat,
 A rushing sound was in his ears, a bundle at his
 feet,
 A little heap of green and gold, with dim and dusty
 hair—
 Alas! the little dancing boy lay faint and bleeding
 there.

The lights are out, the children gone, and Christmas
 passed away,
 But where is little Circus Jim in green and gold
 array?
 Alas! they tried their very best his fragile life to
 save,
 But all in vain, the little boy was carried to his
 grave.

D. B.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 47.)

CHAPTER VII.



IN consequence of Jill's feverish night
 and bright eyes and hot cheeks next
 morning, Mr. Wilson gave orders
 that no more visitors were to be
 admitted to the lap of luxury for a
 day or two, not even Mr. Flower
 or Mr. Mottram; and as for Jack
 and Davy, he would not hear of
 such a thing, though Jill begged
 very hard for Jack, having made a
 little reserve of the largest strawberries for his
 entertainment.

But a very aching little head went a good way
 towards reconciling her to the absence of the boys;
 and when she heard that Jack and Davy were spending
 the morning with Joe Mottram, had undertaken to
 teach him tennis, and that between each game they
 adjourned for a considerable time to the strawberry
 beds to refresh exhausted nature, she felt quite satis-
 fied, and accordingly was much better in the evening
 when Mr. Wilson paid his second visit, and continued
 to improve so steadily during the next few days that
 on Sunday Mr. Wilson gave leave for Jack to come
 and spend the afternoon with her, while nurse went
 out, leaving strict injunctions that Jack was to be
 very quiet and not let Jill get excited, and to see that
 she went to sleep for quite an hour after dinner.

Jill had by this time got so used to her luxurious
 surroundings that she hardly noticed them, but Jack's
 delight and interest in everything brought back all
 the freshness and a hundred times more enjoyment
 than Jill could ever feel about anything by herself.
 It was delightful to see him trying one easy-chair

after another; inspecting himself from top to toe in the long mirror as narrowly, but with less vanity, and more amusement, than a ball-room belle might have done; pulling the blinds up and down to find out the dodge of the patent springs; squirting the eau-de-cologne all over the room, and down his own throat, and into his ears; hovering round the electric bell with a sort of fascinated wish to touch the button, only checked by the fear of any number of servants, male and female, appearing in answer to the summons; trying on the elegant pink dressing-gown that Mrs. Mottram had provided for Jill's use; leaning out of each window in turn till little more than his heels were visible in the room. He altogether refused to taste any of the fruit or jelly, or other nice things that had been brought up for Jill, and would not even accept of a piece of rough ice till Jill invited him to a trial as to which could keep a piece longest in their mouth without melting.

Of course, he had a lot to tell her of all that had happened at home, news of breathless interest about sitting hens and families of rabbits. If you had never been away from home before for a single day like Jill, you would know how utterly insignificant all outside matters really are. She was, perhaps, a little bit wounded in her mind to think that everything could go on so well without her, and without nurse too, who seemed the pivot on which everything turned; and Jack, of course, with masculine want of perception, made the best of everything and described things as being awfully jolly, and tremendous larks, and the governor a whole lot better than he was, and eating no end at dinner.

'And I tell you what, Jill, Mary Anne is a regular brick when nurse is away, and we got on first-rate, and Davy and I help her in her work. We made our beds this morning. It's awfully easy to make beds, only I made mine up with one of my socks inside it, so I had to rummage it all to pieces again before I could dress. And as to the cooking, we're getting quite dabs at it I can tell you. I made the pudding for dinner to-day, such a whopper! I'd not have made it so large if I'd known there would only be Davy and father, but I dare say they'll keep some for supper. Hullo! there's the lunch-bell. Oh, I say!' said Jack, looking at himself in the glass, and running his fingers through his unmanageable curly hair, 'I don't think I'm swell enough to go down. I couldn't find my collars this morning, and Davy's are all fringed at the edge, and my waistcoat has seen its best days. And how's my jacket behind, Jill? Shiney? Oh, that white is off the pillar in church; I don't mind that, it shows where I've been. And that's the comfort, too, about the knees of one's trowsers—they look devout; but spots of grease and grey rims to buttons are not to be accounted for that way. Perhaps I'd better say I had lunch before I left home—rather early, ten o'clock! or shall I say I breakfasted late, or that I don't ever eat lunch, which is true, for I don't get it to eat?'

But Jack's misgivings about his appearance were put to an end by a tap at the door and a maid bringing a message from Mrs. Mottram to ask if Mr. Flower would like to take his lunch with his sister, a proposition which was at once eagerly accepted by both Jack and Jill; and in a few minutes a tray made its

appearance, so plentifully supplied with nice things that any regretful memory of the gooseberry pudding at home was driven entirely out of Jack's mind, and it was only on Jill's earnest entreaty that he refrained from sending his love to the cook when the tray was carried away.

He almost wished the lunch had not been quite so good, as he wanted to give Jill an account of the appearance of the Mottrams at church, and how the old gentleman came strutting in with a waistcoat of all the colours of the rainbow; and when he reached the Hill Park pew how he stood gazing fixedly for half a minute into the crown of his hat, as if he could not quite remember the maker's name; and how Mrs. Mottram had gone to sleep in the sermon, and nodded her bonnet, with the humming-bird in it, all on one side. But Jack felt that after that pigeon-pie he really could not make fun of any of the Mottrams; and that strawberry cream was so nice that it seemed the basest ingratitude to count Mrs. Mottram's numerous chins, or to speculate on her husband being able to cross his legs.

I think it would have been doubtful if Jill had got the hour's sleep bargained for by Mr. Wilson if Jack himself had not grown drowsy in his pursuit after a couple of wasps, and dropped off in a most distorted position, with his leg over the back of an arm-chair and his head on the arm; and when nurse came back expecting to find the room turned upside down and Jill ever so much worse, she was, Jack declared, quite disappointed to find nothing to grumble about. She had to relieve her feelings by falling back on that very old bone of contention, Jack's clothes, and made withering remarks about 'Some people never being fit to be seen, and never having seen such a waistcoat in all her born days; you couldn't put a penny-piece between the spots of grease, and where there wasn't a spot there was a tear;' while Jack figured about in front of the glass, with his thumbs stuck in his arm-holes, examining the article in question with sublime composure, nurse's scoldings having from his earliest years run off him like water off a duck's back.

Jack and Jill had planned that afternoon that she should be quite well by Wednesday, when Martin was to come home; and the next time Mr. Wilson came Jill told him, but he would not hear of such a thing.

Mrs. Mottram, too, was quite distressed and a little offended at the proposal, and thought that it showed that the child was not happy and comfortable. She had taken a great fancy to little Jill ever since that first evening when the child's small, hot fingers had closed on her fat, cool hand, and had pulled it to within reach of a grateful but feverish little kiss. She had often wished for a daughter of her own, and Jill had pretty little winsome ways which must have come to her by nature, seeing that she never could have learnt them from the boys nor from Miss Bridgeman's excellent instruction.

'Why need there be any hurry for the child to go home as long as she's happy here? It's dull for her, to be sure, up in that bedroom, but when she is well enough to be brought downstairs and out in the garden, and to go for drives, it will make it more amusing for her; and her brothers can come up and see her as much as they like, and are nice companions for Joe too.'



Jack making the Pudding.

Mr. Wilson was quite of the same opinion as Mrs. Mottram. And nurse told Jill she did not know which side her bread was buttered; and even the boys, though they wanted Jill to come home, thought she was a duffer not to stay and make hay while the sun shone.

'They'll be tired of you soon enough, and want to get rid of you, I'll be bound,' said Jack, with that

encouraging candour peculiar to schoolboy brothers; 'so you'd best hang on while they think nothing's too good for you.'

It was only father who quite understood Jill's feelings that in those hackneyed old words which are nevertheless so true, and which God grant may continue true, even in this artificial age, there is no place like home, however poor and rough and



The Careless Boy.

shabby it may be. But even father was no match for the Mottrams in league with Mr. Wilson. The doctor declared that the child had sustained a severe shock to the system, and that, being naturally delicate, it would be some time before she got over it; and that, as Mrs. Mottram was kind enough to wish to keep her, it was the very best thing to let Jill stay for a week or so at the Park, till she had picked up a little strength and calmed down her nerves a bit.

It was in vain that father urged that he did not know how they should get on so long without their little housekeeper, and that Martin was coming home, and the holidays were nothing to the boys without Jill. Mrs. Mottram declared that the boys could come to Jill instead of Jill going to them; and Mr. Wilson that Jill would not be fit even to play

at housekeeping for a fortnight at least, and not for much longer than that if they were in too great a hurry to move her, so Mr. Flower reluctantly gave his consent; and Jill, who had been listening to the discussion with eyes wandering from one speaker's face to another, hid her disappointment very bravely and thanked Mrs. Mottram, and only clung round father's neck when he was going away and whispered, 'You won't quite forget Gillyflower? not quite?'

'Forget? why, if it were possible to forget Gillyflower, the boys would never let me forget Jill, for they are always grumbling that there's nothing jolly in the world without her. I should get tired of hearing her name if I did not love it better than any other in the world—except Gillyflower.

(To be continued.)

THE CARELESS BOY.

WILLIE,' said his anxious mother,
 'If you hope to win a prize,
 You must give your mind to study,
 And at early hours must rise.

Come, and read it over to me;
 Read it slowly, more than once;
 Never could I bear my Willie
 To be called an idle dunce.

Dear, I know you are not stupid,
 But I dread your careless ways.
 If in youth you do not study
 You will rue it all your days.

Now, you see you read it better
 Every time you do your task;
 Then be diligent, my Willie,
 That is all that I would ask.' D. B.

A GUESSING STORY.

WE are a family of three. Above me is a brother,
 and below me a sister.

I think I may say with truth that we are all very bright; but my brother is certainly the sharpest of the three. He is the biggest and strongest altogether, a great, large-boned fellow, and that is the reason that we make him do the hardest work. He generally begins all our undertakings, and when he has started them we follow with the easier stages.

It is a delicate matter describing oneself; but I think I may say with truth that I am pretty sharp too. And if you were to hold any sort of converse with me, there would be no lack of point on my side.

My sister is a curiously mixed character. Though far from being sharp, she has a great power of reflecting; only, unfortunately, you can never trust her reflections, for she distorts and exaggerates facts in the strangest way. She never takes a pleasing view of things or people, and you would not feel at all flattered by her reflections if you met her.

Though you might not suspect it, she is a very soft character, and on one occasion acted in a particularly foolish manner. She actually left her family to allow herself to be run away with by a friend, a good deal bigger than herself, but lower in position, with whom she was often brought into contact. The only thing that can be said in my sister's excuse is, that that time was one of great excitement, and some of the steadiest characters acted in an unaccountable way. She soon came back to her senses, returned to us, and has not left us since.

We had missed her much, for we are a very united family. Occasionally, it is true, there are little divisions between my brother and myself, and we find ourselves on opposite sides. My sister, then, always joins my brother; which is prudent, as he is the stronger of the two. But these little divisions only occur when we have nothing to do. As soon as we are set to work again we are soon united.

My sister and I are more aristocratic than my brother, both in our appearance and our taste. We are both fond of heraldry, and pride ourselves on displaying the family crest. My brother will never do so; he says he is too practical a fellow for such nonsense. Though he is very proud of his own powers, he cannot always get through his work, and at such times his employers punish him by making him go through as hard a grind as any schoolboy. He finds he had better try and be sharp again after that, I can tell you.

We are a very sociable family, and you will find us at all the feasts and merry-makings in the country, from royal feasts at court to humble meals with the cottagers. My brother says his only objection to taking his place at table with the humbler classes is, that they always make him do, not only his own work, but what ought to be mine besides.

I do not wish to boast, but I must say that we make ourselves so useful and agreeable, that it is seldom that any public work is begun or ended without our help. As to the lord mayor or aldermen, I do not know how they would get on without us!

You will find us in all civilised countries, unless there should be any strange prejudice against us, as in the Land of Pigtales. Amongst real savages you never meet us. We have no taste, thank you, for such low company. If you do not know who we are by this time, you are not as bright as we are.

E. C. RICKARDS.

TELL.

(Concluded from page 44.)



T had been a long and tiring day to David and Kathleen, who had been busy preparing gifts for their parents, in which occupation they had not been very successful, as they sadly missed Tell's ready help and power of contrivance. Decorations, carols, and presents could not rouse David from the apathetic state which had been growing on him since he had

had that dreadful secret on his mind.

He went to bed fagged and worn out. He did not pull the blind down, as it made him feel less lonely to see the rays of the moon pouring through the frosted window-pane on to his bed. He heard the clock downstairs strike hour after hour, and yet he could not sleep. At last he fell into a slight doze, when he heard the words ring out clearly and distinctly in the silence, 'Tell, Tell.'

His conscience had often told him to confess, but he had never heard the command audibly uttered. David shivered with fear at hearing these words repeated again, and not knowing whence they came. They seemed to bring accusation of the sin he had committed. He tremblingly remembered that people are hanged for murder, and his blood seemed to freeze in his veins as he wondered whether he should end his days on the gallows, if Tell were to die. He could not rest with such thoughts surging through his brain, so he got up and slipped softly into the passage.

He looked over the banisters, and saw down in the hall the cheerful glow of the fire in the stove, which during the winter is never allowed to go out in a Canadian home. He thought he would fetch a book from the parlour, when, on passing the door of Kathleen's bedroom, which was open, he was startled to see his little sister raise herself suddenly in her crib, and looking at him with eyes to which sleep gave a strange expression, she said excitedly, 'Tell, Tell.'

Evidently the little girl's mind was still running on her brother, and so in her dreams she called for him; but to David's excited imagination it seemed as if he saw his sister emphatically reminding him of the duty he had to fulfil.

He crept back to bed ashamed, and determined that nothing should prevent him confessing all at the earliest opportunity.

He hardly slept all night, and directly he heard the bells ringing for the early service he dressed himself and ran off to the Cathedral. He overtook a few men warmly clad in furs, and ladies with woollen shawls wrapped round their necks and faces, who were hurrying to church. David, during the impressive service, earnestly prayed for strength to keep his good resolution of telling all, for he remembered how often he had failed to act up to his intentions by trusting in his own power alone to fulfil them.

When Mr. Stone was leaving the church, after the service was over, David ran up to him and said, 'Oh, sir, I have something most important to tell you.'

'All right, my boy,' was the reply; 'come home with me.'

So David accompanied his kind friend to his lodgings, and as he went up the little staircase he was terribly anxious at what he had to go through. As he entered the study with Mr. Stone, which was strewn with Christmas cards, directed envelopes, brightly bound books, and presents for boys whom he knew, his eyes fell upon a beautiful scarlet toboggan.

Even in this time of anxiety he remembered how much he had wished for one, but now all that seemed so trivial compared to the importance of the present moment.

Mr. Stone, following the boy's glance, placed his hand kindly on his shoulder, and said, 'There David, that's for you.'

But the lad, bravely summoning all his courage, turned round to his friend, and with his hands convulsively clasped together said, 'Don't speak to me until you hear that I have killed Tell.' Then hurriedly, but clearly, came the account of his irritable feelings at not being allowed to join in the purchase of a toboggan, his anger in thinking that his brother had been complaining of him, ending in the impatient push which had caused Tell's fall.

Mr. Stone's face became graver and graver at what he heard, and it grieved him intensely to think that his favourite pupil had so deceived him, while at the same time he saw that the boy had suffered much. When the account was over he said, 'You must now come with me and tell the Rector.' A shiver went through the lad as he saw that another

ordeal was before him, but there was no withstanding the firm voice and grieved look of the curate, so he put on his cap, and silently followed Mr. Stone into the street. The Rector's house was near.

They were shown into the drawing-room, which looked dull and cheerless at this early hour, but a glow came from the dining-room beyond, where preparations were beginning for breakfast. Mr. Stone knew the Rector too well to think that when help was required from him he would ever find anybody unwelcome.

As he then entered the room, his face wore an expression of anxious concern. Without any needless talk Mr. Stone simply shook hands and said, 'I have brought David, sir, because he has something to tell you.' Then the boy for the second time had to make the confession. The clergyman was shocked to find that such a secret had been on David's mind for so many days; but, with his long experience with boys, he saw that it had not been so without much mental pain, so he placed his hands kindly on the lad's shoulders, and looking him gravely in the face he said, 'Your sin has been very great, David, but God grant that you may be forgiven, and that your brother may be spared.' David's lips quivered, and he turned to hide his face when, at the Rector's suggestion, the three joined for a few minutes in earnest prayer, and David was soon in the street again with Mr. Stone. They went straight to David's home. There, when they entered the dining-room, they found Mrs. Sutherland making tea, with an expression of rest on her face which had not been seen for days.

She turned round at the entrance of her son with the curate, and said eagerly, 'Such good news! Tell woke up this morning quite sensible and asked for you, David.'

Mr. Stone knew that David wished his mother to know his secret, but taking pity on the boy who had already gone through so much, he sent him upstairs to see his brother. Then taking a seat by the fire, he told Mrs. Sutherland how wrongly her son had acted, but he also told her how much the boy had endured. The mother was sorely grieved at the narration, but she had felt that something had been wrong to cause the lad to be so depressed. By especial orders of the doctor, nothing was to be said which might excite Tell. Although still very ill, David was glad to see that his brother's large brown eyes looked at him eagerly as he entered the room, but he could only give him an affectionate, boyish kiss, and say how pleased he was to see him better. Mr. Stone soon came up, delighted to find that his little friend could receive with pleasure a gaily bound volume of *The Prize*.

Thus Christmas Day brought to the Sutherlands greater happiness than was expected.

David's fears as to Mr. Stone never speaking to him again when he heard the secret were unfounded, for although he had been grieved at the weakness of his favourite, his affection was rather increased than lessened by the care with which he sought to help him to conquer his failing; and David soon became convinced that with any fault it is always best to go at once and tell.

R. E. C.



"David was glad to see that his brother's large brown eyes looked at him.



Joe's Mishaps at Lawn Tennis.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 53.)

CHAPTER VIII.



H, Jill, what do you think!

Nearly a fortnight had gone by since Jill was shot, and she was perfectly well again in every one's opinion, except Mrs. Mottram's, who coaxed Mr. Wilson to agree with her, that a few more days at Hill Park were quite necessary for her entire restoration to health.

Now that Jill was quite sure she would not be forgotten, and that the boys really missed her, she was very well contented where she was; and, indeed, she would have been very ungrateful if it had not been so, as she was made a perfect little queen of. Joe especially was her most devoted slave, only too pleased to fetch and carry for her, and to play dominoes and draughts all the evening, being beaten every game with the most imperturbable good temper.

Nurse had only stopped for the first few days, as when once Jill was well enough to go downstairs there was nothing further for her to do, as Jill was waited upon hand and foot by half-a-dozen others a great deal more capable and willing than nurse.

'And a good thing too,' nurse said, 'as I come home when I did, as things had come to a pretty pass!' which meant that the brief taste of freedom from her despotism had been sweet to Mary Anne and the boys, and that it was a hard matter to re-establish her authority.

It was a very hot July that year, and Jill used to spend most of the day under a great spreading beech-tree at the corner of the tennis-lawn, where any air that might be stirring found its way. It was a convenient rendezvous for the boys, and saved the necessity of going through the house and facing the pompous old butler, which was a serious ordeal to Martin, who had reached the shy age, and was sensitive on the subject of appearance and manners, while Jack, being still young and impudent, did not feel it so acutely, and rather enjoyed a skirmish with the old man. But it was easier for them all to scale the ha-ha, and come through the rose-garden straight to the beech-tree, where there was always an encampment of comfortable chairs and cushions and hammocks, and Jill generally found them here when the somewhat late and lengthy breakfast at Hill Park was done.

Sometimes, to Martin's disgust, some of the other visitors would stroll out to talk patronisingly to him and Jack, and pretend to play with Jill; and then the boys would remember that there was a cricket-match somewhere, or that they were wanted at home, and make off as quick as they could; but when Jill came with only her attendant slave, Joe, the boys were in no hurry to go, and Jack and Davy would have spent the whole day there if Martin had not rigidly insisted on their going home to dinner and tea, declining steadily for himself and them the daily invitation to lunch, and dragging them off to cold mutton and rice-pudding, in spite of all the delicacies

Jack and Davy desecrated through the dining-room windows.

But to-day half the morning had slipped away without any of the boys appearing, and Jill had grown very impatient, and had gone half-a-dozen times at least to the ha-ha in the blazing sun to see if they were coming.

It was no fun playing tennis with Joe; he was a wretched server through short-sight and general clumsiness, and never could understand the counting, or who won, or why, or that it mattered at all which won, and his only idea of hitting was to use the greatest force he could command, and send the ball, as Jack said, into the middle of next week, in any direction except over the net; and he was always falling down, and getting hit in the eye by the ball, so that altogether he was not a satisfactory opponent; and Jill had at last thrown down her racquet and declared, rather pettishly, that 'Tennis was a stupid game!' and that 'it was much too hot to play.'

But just then Davy made his appearance, running at full speed, and evidently bubbling over with some piece of news, which he began shouting out as soon as he was within earshot, with the words which began this chapter.

'Oh, Jill! What do you think? Father had a telegram just after breakfast to say that Lance was coming this morning, and Martin and Jack have just gone to the station to meet him; and they would not let me go too, because they said my hat was a disgrace to the family. So I thought I would just cut away and tell you; but I can't stop, for we are going to have no end of a dinner, and nurse is as cross as a bear, and wants me to fetch a kit of things.'

'What does father say?'

'Oh, not much; but I expect he is awfully pleased. I wish Uncle Will was coming too; it would be jolly to see him! We've not had any one stopping in the house for ever so long, not since I can remember. We have had to take a lot of things out of your room, Jill, to rig up the spare room, and Martin dodged the looking-glass to keep it from swinging over, and I got a soap-dish at Watson's exactly the same pattern as the china, only blue instead of green, and I promised Mary Anne to lend a hand with his boots in the morning, as I expect he'll know what good boot-cleaning is. It's awfully slow for you, being out of it all up here,' said Davy, who had done nothing hitherto but envy 'Jill's luck,' and 'wish that Joe would take a stray shot at him.' 'But I dare say you will be coming home in a day or two now, so you won't miss all the fun. Well, I must be off,' went on Davy, with much importance. 'You won't see much of us now I expect, for, of course, we shall have enough to do making things jolly for Lance. Good-bye!' and off he went, leaving Jill swinging herself slowly in her hammock, and gazing reflectively up into the beech-tree overhead.

She was not so sure as Davy seemed that Lance's coming was such a very jolly thing, or that father would be awfully pleased about it. She knew that Uncle Will's letters had always been a trouble and a worry, and that of late there had been some difficulty about Lance, on account of which father had talked of taking Martin away from Radbourne; but perhaps Lance was coming to set it all right and to pay back

the money Uncle Will had borrowed; and Jill jumped gladly at this cheerful explanation of Lance's visit, and longed to see father looking relieved, and to be home among all the fun and bustle of the preparations.

'Perhaps the boys will bring him up here to play tennis,' she thought; 'it's such a shocking bad court at home. But perhaps they don't play tennis where he comes from, and, beside, he's a year older than Martin—almost grown up, so I dare say he'll sit and talk to father, and read the newspaper.'

And so Jill went on wondering what this strange cousin would be like, till at lunch Mr. Mottram offered 'a penny for her thoughts,' and, not having any small change, paid half-a-crown when she told him, which gave her something else to think of in deciding how she should spend it.

She would rather have stopped at home that afternoon on the chance of the boys coming; but Mrs. Mottram wanted her to go for a drive, and when she got home she found that Jack and Davy had been up, but had gone again, so that it was not till next morning that she heard anything about Lance.

Then it was Jack who came alone, and Jill, who was on the look-out, rushed to meet him.

'I wanted Lance to come too,' he said; 'but the governor would not let him, and sent him and Martin off to see the Roman remains at Woodley, which he doesn't care a snap for, and I don't believe they went either. But he is a brick, Jill! and it's fun enough just to hear him talk. He's not really much older than Martin, you know, but he's been everywhere and seen everything,' said Jack, comprehensively; 'and he makes father laugh no end with his stories. And there's no nonsense about him either: he's not a bit stuck up, and he doesn't try and come it like some fellows do. Father's awfully taken with him. He'll put your nose out of joint if you don't look sharp and come home.'

'But wasn't it Lance and Uncle Will who used to be always writing and asking father for money?' asked Jill, puzzled.

'Well, I don't know,' said Jack. 'I think you must have made a muddle of it somehow, Jill, for I don't believe Lance is a bit hard up. He came first-class from London, and he brought out quite a handful of silver to pay the porter who brought his traps from the station. He's far away a greater swell than any of the men up here, though I know some of them have pots of money; and he gave a shilling to a beggar in the road this morning while I was rummaging after a halfpenny. You should see his dressing-case, too, Jill; such jolly ivory brushes with our crest on them, and lots of silver-topped bottles, and all the rest of it!'

'How long is he going to stay?'

'I don't know, but I hope all through the holidays. I say, Jill, isn't there a billiard-room up here? Lance said he thought there must be. He is going to teach us to play, and yesterday afternoon, when I and Davy were up here he took Martin into "The Bush," and they had a game there, and Martin is quite mad about it, but Lance says it's such a horrid old table, not worth playing on.'

'But father doesn't like your going into "The Bush."'

'Oh! that was when we were small boys,' said

Jack, but with rather an uneasy avoiding of Jill's eye; 'and, of course, it makes all the difference our going there with Lance. I don't think Davy ought to go, because he is such a little chap, but it can't matter about Martin and me. Oh, it was such a lark, Jill, last night! Lance was smoking outside in the garden. Oh, yes! he smokes little cigarettes—jolly little things that he rolls up himself as slick as possible. He says all the fellows out there begin to smoke when they're quite little chaps, and no one thinks anything of it, and that a good many of the ladies do it, too. And Davy thought he would like to have a try, and he was as cocky about it as you please, and puffed away like anything, and we forgot all about him, till Lance gave me a nudge, and there was Davy as white as a sheet, and off he bolted and was jolly sick.'

'Poor old Davy!' said Jill, rather missing the point of the joke.

'I can't think why the governor don't like his coming up here. Lance wants to see the old place, for he's heard a lot about it from Uncle Will; but father didn't seem somehow to like it, and he turned off quite crusty when we began chaffing about old Mottram dropping his h's, and being such a jolly old cad; and he said they had been very kind, and he would not have anything said against them in his presence, and regularly shut us up; but, of course, we did not mean anything nasty.'

'I wonder if I shall like Lance?' Jill said, rather doubtfully. She did not feel so certain of liking any one who made Davy sick, and father crusty, and who took Martin to "The Bush."

'Like him? Of course you will! You can't help it. You should hear him play! That's what I call jolly playing, not counting—"One, two, three, four," all the time, and frowning away hard at the music. He has never really learnt properly, he says, but has picked it up by himself, and he just sits down and plays jolly little waltzes and bits of tunes, or whistles the tune. And he sings a lot of things, most of them French or Italian, or some such gibberish, which is a pity; but most of them have jolly choruses, that we can join in; and you should only have heard the row we made this morning singing one with a laughing chorus!'

'Had father a headache?' wondered Jill.

(To be continued.)

BREWERS' HORSES.

THE native English cart-horse is a huge animal, and stands about seventeen hands high, and more. These horses are bred chiefly, but not solely, in Lincolnshire. Their price when in their prime sometimes is more than 100*l*. The use of these very heavy horses is now chiefly confined to brewers' drays, to contractors' trollies for conveying blocks of stone, and for drawing carts carrying iron-work, such as boilers, parts of bridges, and the like.

Watt, the great engineer, ascertained at one of the London breweries that the average force exerted by the strongest of their horses was sufficient to raise 33,000*lbs*. one foot high in a minute; thus, an engine of 200 horse-power would be a force equal to



Brewers' Horses.

that of 200 horses, each lifting 33,000 lbs. one foot high per minute.

It was a noble group of such horses as these that did solemn service at the Duke of Wellington's funeral. A team of these grand black horses, exerting their strength to the utmost, dragged the ponderous car of sculptured bronze at stately pace up the steep rise of Ludgate Hill, till, slowly and surely making their way through the dense and silent crowd, they reached the gates of St. Paul's Cathedral, with the coffin which contained the earthly remains of England's 'Iron Duke.'

M. G. M.

HEINRICH AND THE WOLF.

DARK clouds had gathered o'er the sky,
The snow was falling fast,
While in the forest deep and dense
There raged a furious blast.

Cold Winter stretched his icy hand
O'er mountain and o'er moor,
O'er noble hall and peasants' hut
Where dwelt the shivering poor.



Henrich and the Wolf.

Carl Ruder lay upon his bed,
His axe was idle now;
For pain had bound the woodman fast,
And furrowed deep his brow.

His gentle wife was in her grave,
And Ruder lived alone—
Save for his boy, his brave Heinrich,
His dear and only son.

Heinrich was barely fifteen years,
But bold and strong was he;
No better hand than his to fell
The mighty forest tree.

When Winter, with its icy breath,
Had brought the whirling snow,
He did not fear to take the axe
And to the forest go.

He did not fear the hungry wolf,
He cared not for its howl;
Though often near the woodman's cot
He saw the monsters prowl.

One evening, when the storm was loud,
And frost-bound lay the earth,
Young Heinrich put the shutters up,
And swept the glowing hearth.

Then kindly raised the sick old man,
And brought him welcome food;
While the poor woodman praised the Lord
Who made his son so good.

And thus in pleasant converse they
The evening hours beguiled;
Regardless of the bitter storm,
The tempest, fierce and wild.

When hark! the sound of stealthy steps
Upon the snow outside;
It is an old gray forest wolf
Resolved to get inside.

It clambers to the very roof,
And down the chimney peers;
While Ruder lies upon the bed
Oppressed by dreadful fears.

For was he not a helpless man,
Held down by bitter pain?
Full well he knows his trusty axe
He'll never use again.

He turned him to his boy—"Heinrich,
Hear'st thou that thief?" he said;
'He's tearing up the very roof
Above thy father's bed.

It is no common wolf, I know,
Or 'twould not come alone,
My poor old arm is helpless now—
What wilt thou do, my son?"

With flushing cheek the brave young lad
Has risen to his feet,
And with his trusty axe in hand
Goes forth the foe to meet.

It was, indeed, no common foe
That Heinrich now beheld,
As, staring with its bloodshot eyes
(By hunger fierce impelled),

It burst with fury on the youth,
Despising all his strength,
Until by fierce repeated blows
He bore it down at length.

Stretched on the frozen ground it lay,
Poor Heinrich by its side,
While over man and beast there welled
The horrid crimson tide.

* * * *

'Oh, Heinrich! oh, my own loved boy!
But Heinrich raised his head;
'Father, I'm scarcely hurt at all,
And you are saved!' he said.

Oh, brave young heart! and kind as brave,
Was ever son so good?
Long may he live to cheer and bless
The cottage in the wood. D. B.

A GAME FOR THE TWILIGHT.

I DO hate the twilight, when it is neither light enough to do anything, nor dark enough for the gas!' exclaimed Nellie Brooke, pushing the drawing with which she was busy away from her with an impatient air.

'I think it is dark enough to light the gas when it is too dark to see to read,' answered Charlie, the studious one of the family, who had been poring over a book in the bow-window, where the rays of light lingered longest.

'But mother does not think so; do you, mother?' said little Lucy, turning towards the arm-chair in which Mrs. Brooke was seated.

A gentle snore was the only answer she received, and Charlie laughed as he said, 'No wonder mother does not want the gas; she can see to sleep without it.'

'Let us play at a game!' cried Julian, the youngest boy.

'What game?' Nellie asked, gloomily. 'We have played at "proverbs" till we are sick of it, and "buried cities" too.'

'Well, there is "animal, vegetable, or" ——' but Julian's voice was drowned in a general 'ugh' of unfeigned weariness and disgust, and a despondent silence fell upon the group, only broken by the gentle breathing of Mrs. Brooke, which assured the children that she was still fast asleep, and made the prospect of gas a distant one.

'We played a game when I was staying with the Smiths at Brighton; it was really a very good one!' exclaimed Marjorie. 'I forgot about it till this minute.'

'What game?' asked several voices; and Marjorie sat upright on the rug, where she had been lying beside the dog, and began her explanations.

'Well—let me see; how was it? Oh, yes, you—

you ——
'Thought of a thing, of course,' interrupted Charlie. 'No, you did *not*,' replied Marjorie, with great indignation: 'it was not that at all. This was how it was: well, for instance ——'

'One person went out of the room,' suggested Nellie, as Marjorie hesitated again.

And Charlie added, 'You may as well confess at once that you cannot remember *how* it was played.'

'But I *do* remember quite well,' insisted poor Marjorie, 'if you would only give me time. One person said, "I planted such and such a thing, and what came up?" And then all the others guessed. It was very difficult, I can tell you.'

'I should think it *was* difficult,' cried Nellie, with a laugh. 'No one on earth could guess what would be the result of planting "such and such a thing."

'Oh, but you told the thing. For instance, I might say, "I planted Uncle Bill, and what came up?"'

This was received with dead silence.

'Don't you see? Oh, how stupid you all are!'

Marjorie was getting exasperated. "I planted Uncle Bill, and what came up?" Sweet William, of course; anybody might see that.

'How Sweet William?' asked Julian, blankly.

But Marjorie took no notice, and proceeded to give another example of her new game, which she wisely thought was the best way of explaining it to her captious audience.

'I planted a bird in tatters, and what came up?'

'Ragged robin,' said Charlie, promptly; and he immediately added, 'I planted a colour, and what came up?'

'Lavender,' answered Marjorie, in a superior tone; while Nellie, who had been silent for some time, broke in with, 'I planted a parting request, and what came up?'

'A parting request?' repeated Charlie, thoughtfully. 'Oh, forget-me-not!'

'I planted a compliment, and what came up?' This was Marjorie's question, and she was quite glad that no one guessed the answer, so that she might explain triumphantly, 'A blush rose;' and she could not forbear asking, 'Is not it a good one?'

'I planted a kick in Rover's back!' cried Julian, suiting the action to the word, 'and what came up?'

There was a shout of 'a dog-rose,' and a general laugh as Rover stalked majestically to the other end of the room, and lay down at Mrs. Brooke's feet with an ostentatious sigh.

'I planted Oscar Wilde, and what came up?' asked Charlie; and before any one had answered a voice was heard from the sofa at the other end of the room, where Basil, the eldest son, was supposed to be in the same peaceful state as his mother, saying, 'I planted a visiting-card, and what came up?' And after allowing a space of about two seconds for thought, he went on, 'I know none of you will guess it: a cally-flower—cauliflower; don't you see?'

This effort of genius was greeted with shouts of derisive laughter from every one except Lucy, who, having neither made nor answered a single question, was quite sure she would have solved this one if Basil had only given her time, and felt much injured that he had not done so.

'I planted a letter of the alphabet, and what came up?'

This was from Nellie; and the shout of 'tea' and 'pea,' which came simultaneously from Marjorie and Julian, was followed by a lively discussion as to which was the correct answer.

In the midst of it Charlie repeated the question he had asked before, and of which he was longing to tell the answer, 'I planted Oscar Wilde, and what came up?' in such a loud voice that Mrs. Brooke woke up and instantly said, 'I am sure, my boy, I do not know how you could expect them to come up, stuck in so hastily, and never watered from that day to this.'

Mrs. Brooke was much puzzled by the laughter with which her words were received, and it took some time to explain to her that Charlie was not speaking of the nasturtium seeds, but playing at a new game; and she quite started when Nellie, who had been thinking deeply, suddenly exclaimed, 'A dandy lion!' in answer to Charlie's question about Oscar Wilde.'

'I planted a stone in a window, and what came up?'

This was another of Basil's inventions, and it gave rise to a great deal of guessing.

'A stone in a window?' said Nellie, musingly; and they all cried eagerly, 'No, no!' when Basil asked, 'Do you give it up?'

After a prolonged silence and much cogitation, Basil asked again, 'Give it up?' and again they all said, 'No, no,' and Lucy begged piteously not to be hurried. At last, however, patience was exhausted, and the cry became, 'Well, what was it then?'

'A bobby,' replied Basil, carelessly; and he walked out of the room with his hands in his pockets, as the maid came in to light the gas, without waiting to hear the remarks of his young brothers and sisters on his heartless conduct in having so taken them in.

C. P. GRANT.

AT GREENHITHE ON THE THAMES.

BARGE GETTING READY FOR SEA.

GETTING ready for sea! has a cheerful sound, especially for seafaring ears, as it means being off and away from land-life and idleness, and out to sea with its changes and excitements, its duties and work, which will bring by-and-by the money to keep wife and little ones warm and well fed over in the cottage on the beach yonder. But what work 'getting ready' is! Of course it is! When was anything done in this world of ours *without* work and trouble? The vessel, whether brig, or barque, or barge, must first be overhauled to make sure she is seaworthy. Keel, hull, deck, masts, ropes, sails, anchor-chains, everything must be carefully inspected and set in order.

What a fuss! you say. Would the merchants who are sending out their goods think anything 'a fuss' which would secure their merchandise a safe water-tight passage? Would little Bill the cabin-boy's mother think anything a fuss which would make her lad a bit more comfortable, or by God's blessing help to keep him safer when he is far away from her, and the great waves are rolling high, and the winds blowing strong and fierce? Surely not! So for owners and merchants, sailors and passengers' sakes, everything about the vessel *itself* must first be made right and safe.

Then the lading may begin, and what a scene of bustle and dirt, pushing and throwing, shouting and scolding it is! No matter what the cargo may be, whether (as it often is at Greenhithe) it is lime or flints from the immediate neighbourhood, which are needed at numberless places; or it is all the luggage and necessities for one of the great emigrant ships in the docks; or, what we are hearing so much of just now, military stores and queer camel saddles at Woolwich for Egypt and the Soudan; or, over away in sunny Spain, wooden boxes of golden oranges or tightly packed plums and raisins, ready for our Christmas season; or groups of biting, chattering, scratching monkeys for Mr. Jamrack's queer store-rooms in Radcliffe Highway. Lading at the best of times is an untidy, noisy job, and it is not till the vessel is well out from port that all is stowed away in the hold, the decks cleaned up, and the sailor life begins in reality.



At Greenhithe on the Thames. — Barge getting ready for Sea.



"Martin thinks of nothing but Lance."

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 59.)

CHAPTER IX.



T was some days before Jill really saw this Cousin Lance, of whom she heard so much, though the boys did not come up nearly as often to Hill Park as they had done before he arrived; but whenever they came they were full of his praises.

Mrs. Mottram had persuaded Mr. Flower to let Jill stop for another week, and go with them to a cricket-match at Woodley, and Mr. Flower had not made nearly as much objection as he had done before, though Jill, excited by the boys' description of home doings, rather hoped he would make a point of her return.

It was a beautiful afternoon for the Woodley match, and the whole party staying at Hill Park went to it; but as they were not all as deeply interested in the matter as Jill, most of them soon had enough of it, and went on for a drive, while Mrs. Mottram, to please Jill, had her large carriage pulled up under the great spreading elms at the side of the field, and the horses taken out; and under shelter of Jill's enthusiasm, she got a very comfortable nap in the corner of the carriage.

Jill knew that the boys would be there, but, of course, they were over by the tent, and much too absorbed in the game to think of anything else; for was not the honour of Shettle concerned in every good 'drive,' or swift, round-hand ball? She was longing for Jack to come across and tell her how the game had been going before she got there, and who had scored most runs, and what the chances were of Woodley getting a thorough good licking, for none of the Hill Park party seemed to know anything about cricket, not even Joe, who clapped and cried, 'Well run! well run!' quite as heartily when a Woodley man was distinguishing himself as when a Shettle man was in, which Jill felt showed a hopeless degree of ignorance of the noble game.

She could see Jack's curly head and faded blue cap on the other side of the field, and could distinguish his voice among the shouts that greeted a triumphant score for Shettle, and her eyes, and ears, and thoughts were so taken up with the cricket and Jack that she quite started when a voice close beside her said, 'You are my little cousin Jill, I am sure; and I am Lance, at your service. The boys are too deep in the game to move an inch, so I must introduce myself.'

And before Jill knew where she was she was kissed on both cheeks, and Lance was raising his hat to Mrs. Mottram, who had woke up from her nap with a jerk and a fly on her nose, and grabbed nervously at her bonnet to make sure it was properly perched.

Yes, Jill liked him. He was a little like father and like Martin, only darker, with a sort of foreign look about him, like an Italian boy who came one day selling plaster images at Bengrove. He had soft, dark eyes, and a way of letting the lids and long, black lashes fall over them in rather a sentimental way, and he did not look bolt at you, as the boys did, so that you

could see in a moment what he meant, as you could with them.

Now if it had been Jack he would have shown by his eyes at once that he saw Mrs. Mottram had been asleep, even if he had not been impelled, by an un- luckily ready tongue, to tell her so; but Lance's long lashes covered the tail of a smile, and Mrs. Mottram thought what an agreeable young fellow he was.

Jill sat by, listening and wondering as Lance talked to Mrs. Mottram. He was so very different from Martin and Jack. They would have gone miles out of their way to avoid such a conversation, and if, by any ill chance, they had been caught and dragged into it, they would have looked thoroughly miserable, answered principally in monosyllables, grown very red, kicked at a pebble on the ground, or twisted the handle of the carriage-door backwards and forwards, and they certainly would have taken the first opportunity of cutting it short and making their escape, or have invented an excuse for doing so if none had offered naturally.

But Lance stood there quite at his ease, smiling and showing his even white teeth, and speaking with that soft, foreign tone and accent which made his words sound so much more musical and graceful than the ordinary rough English speech.

Jill watched and listened with a sort of fascination which actually distracted her attention entirely from the game, and still more wonderful to relate, made her unconscious that Jack was making his way across the field towards her, till Joe Mottram called her attention to the fact and proposed that they should go and meet him.

'Yes, I came to fetch you,' Lance said; 'Martin wants you to come across a bit, if Mrs. Mottram can spare you; and I suppose Jack thought I had forgotten all about it, and is coming to remind me. I do not understand much about cricket,' he said to Mrs. Mottram, 'but it seems a most absorbing game to my cousins, and I have had hardly a word from them since the game began.'

'No more do I,' said Mrs. Mottram, glad of a sympathiser; 'I can't make head or tail of it, or see what they make such a piece of work about. You'd better stay and have a chat with me, while Jill goes to her brothers.'

And Lance gladly accepted the invitation, and took Jill's place in the carriage while she and Joe went off together.

'I was just coming over,' Jack said when they met him, 'to see what that fellow Lance was about. He made a bet with Martin that he'd go and dine at Hill Park to-night, and I expect he's humbugging away no end to get asked, and he don't want me to come and spoil sport. What was he talking about when you came away?'

'He was saying that Uncle Will had met Mr. Mottram at Lord Somebody's.'

'Lord Fiddlesticks!'

'Oh, Jack! I thought you liked Lance so much.'

'Yes, so I do; one can't help liking him; but he's a lot too fond of humbugging. It's all very well with nurse. It's awful fun to hear him cramming her up, and she thinks that butter won't melt in his mouth; and I don't mind it with Davy sometimes, but it puts

my monkey up when he tries it on with father, and I gave Davy a black eye one day because he let Lance humbug the governor that we had been in the garden all the evening, when we hadn't. He doesn't mean any harm by it,' Jack went on quickly, in answer to the look on Jill's face: 'it's just his way, you know, and he's awfully jolly all the same.'

Jill did not receive much welcome from Martin, who seemed in a very surly condition, and much more taken up in watching Lance over in the Mottrams' carriage than interested in the cricket.

'Oh, you won't get much out of Martin,' Jack said; 'he thinks of nothing but Lance, and is jealous if he looks at any one else. I have never seen him so taken up with any one.'

Some of the same sort of fascination seemed to have taken hold of Jill, for she was not half so much interested in the match as she had been, and she kept wondering what they were talking about over there, and was quite glad when she saw the sleek grey horses brought up to be put into the carriage and Joe coming skirting round the field to fetch her, constantly getting into the way of the ball and receiving the imprecations of the players.

To her surprise Martin volunteered to go back with her and steer her across, but she guessed it was much more on Lance's account than hers that he did so.

Lance seemed in this short time to have made great friends. He was putting on Mrs. Mottram's dust cloak, and neither inside out nor upside down as Jack would have done, and Mr. Mottram was clapping him on the back and calling him 'My boy.' As for that bet with Martin, it was very plain that Lance had won, for Mr. Mottram called out to Jill that her cousin was coming to dine with them, so she must brush up her parley-voos and tell cook to dish up some frogs for dinner.

'Oh, Lance!' burst out Martin, in a tone of such disappointment, that Jill felt sure it was more than a lost bet; 'you know you promised.' But Lance was busy with Mrs. Mottram's cloak, and did not seem to hear what Martin said, and Martin pulled his sleeve roughly from Jill's little sympathising hand, and went off in dudgeon, and either *did* not or *would* not see Mrs. Mottram beckoning and making signs to him. That kind lady meant to invite him to come to dinner with Lance, and though Lance saw what she wanted and could have stopped Martin in a minute, he made no effort to do so; and when Jill offered to run after Martin and tell him, Lance said he thought 'his cousin was wanted at home that evening,' and Jill remembered Jack's words, 'that Master Lance was humbugging the old Mottrams, and did not want the boys to spoil sport.'

Mrs. Mottram was full of Lance's praises as they drove home, 'so gentlemanly,' 'so good-looking,' 'so charming in manner,' 'he seems so fond of your father, Jill, and of the boys; and it was some time before we could persuade him to dine with us to-night, because he had promised to join in some little scheme of amusement. I'm afraid your brother was disappointed, but they must not be too exacting, and keep him quite to themselves, but spare him to us now and then.

(To be continued.)

THE SQUIRREL.



THIS pretty, lively little creature, has his home in the woods, and may be found in almost every country in the world except Australia. In temperate regions squirrels especially abound, but to be seen also in the cold north and in the burning tropics. He is very active and lively, never at rest from morning till night; somewhat shy at the same time, with a kind of innocent pertness which makes him very amusing. The front legs are short, the paw having four toes with strong curved claws, which enable him to climb both rapidly and securely. The hind legs are much longer, to enable him to leap; they have five toes, the claws scarcely so curved.

He climbs with the greatest agility, leaping from branch to branch, and from tree to tree, finding his food in berries, seeds, nuts, and the young shoots of trees. For a change of diet, however, he has been known to plunder the nests of birds, and not only suck the eggs, but devour the young ones. He is really a pretty little creature, about eight inches in length, exclusive of the tail, which is a beautiful brush, more than six inches in length, and generally carried over his back. In colour he is a brownish red above, greyish white underneath. In very cold weather his whole fur assumes a somewhat greyish tint.

The squirrel makes a beautiful nest of moss, twigs, dried leaves, all curiously interlaced together, generally placed in the fork of some tree, at some distance from the ground. Here, in midsummer, the baby squirrels may be seen, three or four of them in a nest, peeping out of the little home, and surveying the green trees all around them. They remain with their parents till the following spring, when they begin life for themselves. All squirrels lay up hoards of food, as a winter supply. These hoards (consisting of nuts, grain, and especially the seeds of fir cones) are to be found in holes in the ground; sometimes one pair of squirrels will have several hoards in various places.

The grey squirrel of Hudson's Bay and North America is a much larger animal, its whole length, tail included, being nearly two feet. Their habits, however, are similar to the common red squirrel of our woods, but their fur is thicker and more valuable.

The squirrel is very easily tamed, lives well in captivity, and makes an amusing and interesting pet.

YOU little bright-eyed darling! stay,
We would not do you harm;
We love to watch your pretty ways,
So banish all alarm.

Oh, Willie, look! his tiny paws
Have got a nut between;
Such a dear little thief as this
I'm sure was never seen.



The Squirrel.

I wonder, would he let me stroke
His fur, so soft and brown?
Come, Willie, you and Edward try
To lift him gently down.

But off he scampers with a bound,
And antics not a few,
And hidden by the leafy screen
Is quickly lost to view.

D. B.



EMMA'S DOLL.

WAS ever a boy now so clever as I?
 Why, look at this doll! I have mended her eye.
 It rattled about in the crown of her head
 Till Emma declared that her dolly was dead.

I've made it all right! but now don't you think
 A slight touch of paint, just a delicate pink,
 Would greatly improve her, if laid on with care?
 (My sister I think will agree with me there.)

Besides, I've some gum in my own little pot ;
I'll gum on her wig now—pray, why should I not ?
No one I feel sure can make any complaint,
Or say I do harm with my gum and my paint.

I wonder how Emma can love that old doll ?
I never would wish such a present at all !
When my birthday comes, I shall choose a big drum.
Oh, how I do wish that my birthday would come !'
D. B.



FAITHFUL FRITZ.

NICOLAS MÜLLER was a German peasant-boy, and he lived alone with his grandmother in the village of Königstein. She was very old and very deaf, and spent nearly all her time in warming herself by the stove and knitting coarse socks for her grandson to wear. Frau Müller's house was one of the smallest in the place, and she was very poor. She could earn no money herself, and all they had to live on was earned by Nicolas, who went to Homburg three times a-week to sell the vegetables which grew in their garden.

He had one friend in the world besides his grandmother, and that friend was a large yellow-coated dog, with a dark face and soft, sad, brown eyes. Fritz was not a handsome dog: he worked very hard, and had very little to eat, and so he looked shaggy, and thin, and dejected. Nicolas and Fritz used to go to Homburg together, Fritz drawing the cart which held the vegetables and his master walking in front. Whatever Nicolas had for his own dinner he always shared it with the faithful dog; but neither had as much as they would have liked, and they were often nearly as hungry when their meal was finished as when they began it. But they never complained, for they had brave hearts, and expected to be hungry and tired every day.

It was ten miles from Königstein to Homburg, and that was a long walk for Nicolas, and for Fritz too; for he had the heavy cart rumbling and jolting after him. First, they went through the dark forest, with its rows of straight pine-trees standing as regularly as soldiers on parade; and when the trees were left behind they had to traverse some three miles of a white dusty road, with hedgeless fields on each side. The red roofs of Homburg and the Castle rising high above them were a welcome sight to the tired travellers.

Nicolas began business as soon as he reached the town. He took up his station on the shady side of the principal street, arranged his vegetables, and waited for customers.

Fritz, meanwhile, glad to be released from the harness, lay down beside him and dozed, but never seemed so fast asleep as not to open his bright eyes and look at every one who came to buy.

Nicolas, although he was often hungry, used to enjoy the long days in that bright little town. There were so many grandly-dressed ladies and gentlemen walking up and down; there were so many carriages

rattling over the paved streets with a deafening noise; and now and then a soldier, in his bright blue coat, would go past, looking very proud of himself; or a peasant, in a short plaited petticoat and print jacket, and a little black cap on her head, and heavy shoes on her feet, would pass with just such another cart as that which Fritz drew, only Nicolas never thought any dog was equal to Fritz. And when every one had gone home to dinner, Nicolas had still the blue hills beyond the trees, at the end of the street, to look at, and the row of houses opposite to him with their green venetian blinds, and balconies full of geraniums.

At five o'clock he used to harness Fritz, pack up his remaining vegetables, and set off home.

One afternoon in July, when the sun was still high and the weather was very hot, he had sold all his goods earlier than usual, and by four o'clock he was on his way to Königstein. A cloud of dust was raised by the little cart, and it covered Fritz's face, and made him sneeze, but nevertheless he followed his master bravely.

Nicolas was eating a piece of sour brown bread, but he did not forget his friend, and gave him bits every now and then. Fritz watched for them eagerly; but he never asked for anything, as some dogs would have done, for he knew very well that Nicolas had not much for himself.

After they had left the white dusty road, and were in the shade of the trees, Nicolas told Fritz that he might rest a little; and the dog lay down and forgot even to snap at the flies, he was so hot and tired.

The boy had chosen a lovely place for the halt, although he did not think much more about the loveliness than Fritz, who was half asleep. The air was clear and cool; the sun shone softly through the trees; grasshoppers chirped on every side; the ground was covered with short, fine turf, and ferns and wild flowers; and in the distance the houses of Frankfort could be dimly seen, and behind again were the blue hills, looking bright and clear in the warm air.

The breeze blew away Nicolas's tired feelings, and he skipped and jumped about, quite forgetting that he had a seven miles' walk before him. There was a little ditch not more than a yard wide, and he amused himself jumping backwards and forwards over this. But he did this once too often, for hardly had he cleared it the third time, than he caught his foot in a bilberry-bush, and fell into the stony ditch. He tried to get up, but when he moved the pain was so great that (brave little man though he was) he could not help crying out. No one heard him but Fritz, and he ran up, dragging the lumbering cart after him. He saw something was amiss but he did not know what to do, so he licked his master's hand with his rough tongue, and looked the sorrow which he could not speak.

'This is unlucky,' said little Nicolas, 'and so far from home too; and such a lonely place, no one will pass by for hours, if then. But you will stay with me, Fritz: we have often been hungry before.'

Fritz sat down by Nicolas, evidently expecting the boy to get up; and when he made no movement Fritz patted him gravely with his paw, as if to warn him that it was getting late.

'I can't get up, old Fritz, I have hurt my foot: I cannot stand.'

Again the gentle paw was raised, and the dog rubbed his head against Nicolas's hand.

'I don't know what you want, Fritz; we shall have to stop here all night.'

But Fritz did not seem inclined to stop there all night. He gave Nicolas a farewell paw and set off at a trot in the direction of Königstein. In vain Nicolas called; Fritz did turn his head, but he did not go back; rather he quickened his speed, and was soon out of sight.

If Nicolas shed some tears when the dog was gone, it was not only from the pain in his foot.

Fritz had a great business to perform, and he was quite too full of it to heed his master's voice. The cart was heavy, and the poor fellow was tired, and hungry, and thirsty; but he got over the seven long miles as quickly as his tired feet would carry him. He met a few peasants going home from their work, but if they called to him he only ran the faster.

By six o'clock the little cart was rattling along the quiet street of Königstein, startling the pigeons who were pecking about, and bringing the German housewives to their doors to wonder where that 'lazy Nicolas' could be that his faithful Fritz had come home before him.

Fritz went straight to his own door and scratched loudly with his paws, but Frau Müller heard him no more than she heard the soft summer wind which was blowing round the house. She sat clicking her knitting-needles with the sunlight falling on her through the vine-leaves outside the window, and making a flickering diamond pattern all over her dress.

Fritz at last grew tired of watching the handle of the door with his wistful eyes, and seeing a villager pass he went to him and stood before him wagging his tail.

'Get away, you brute!' said the man, angrily; and Fritz slunk back with a sad heart.

After a time Johann Humbert came up the street whistling, and saw poor Fritz standing dejectedly at the door.

'What is Nicolas thinking of,' he said, 'to leave the dog in the cart so long, and without any supper too?'

And then he came up and patted Fritz, who looked delighted and licked his hands. Johann lifted the handle of the door and went in.

'Here is Fritz, mother, waiting for his supper. Where is Nicolas all this time?'

The old woman heard not a word, so Johann altered his question.

'Where is Nicolas?' he said, shouting in her deaf ears.

'Fritz come home without little Nicolas? The boy is hurt somewhere in the forest! If I were ten years younger I would run myself, Johann, but I'm old and can't stir. Surely the dog will guide you to where my boy is? He is as sensible as many a man.'

'Don't be unhappy; I will go and look for him, whether the dog comes or no: but first I will unharness the poor fellow.'

Fritz jumped about quite gaily when he was released from the harness, and took hold of Johann's coat and tried gently to drag him out of the house.

'I will follow you, my boy, never fear,' said Johann; 'if only you will take me straight.'

Fritz looked up into Johann's eyes, and then set off at a sober pace on the return journey. He did not run from side to side and gambol about, but he kept steadily on as if life were a very serious thing to him; which indeed it was. Sometimes he looked back at Johann, who came striding after him.

Fritz led Johann by a very direct path, but before they reached the place where he left Nicolas it was getting dark among the pines, and the wind was making mournful music high up in the branches.

At last Fritz bounded forward with a bark of delight, and Johann saw what seemed to him to be a bundle of rags lying in the path.

He soon found that it was Nicolas, but the poor boy was insensible from pain and hunger. Johann got some water from the brook and dashed it over him, while faithful Fritz never moved from his master's side.

Nicolas opened his eyes after a while and sat up, and seeing Fritz he remembered what had happened and said,—

'Fritz, old boy! you won't leave me?'

'That he won't,' said Johann's cheerful voice; 'and no more will I until I have you safe at home. What has happened to you?'

'It's my leg,' said Nicolas, sitting up and looking about him. 'I can't stand on it, but I don't know what is the matter with it.'

Johann soon found out that it was broken.

'I shall have to carry you home. It's lucky you are not much of a weight.'

He lifted Nicolas up very carefully and carried him all the way home, although he sometimes found it a heavy load up the hills.

It was a long time before Nicolas could go to Homburg again, and before the time came his poor old grandmother was dead and he was left quite alone in the world. The neighbours were very good to him, but he did not like to be a burden to them, and the first day he felt equal to the journey he filled the little cart with vegetables and harnessed Fritz. He was very tired when he reached Homburg, and a kind man who passed him saw his white face and took pity on him.

'Why, my little fellow, where have you been this six weeks?'

Nicolas told his story; and the man patted Fritz and called him a hero, and then said,—

'Ten miles is a long way for you to walk; how would you like to live here always?'

After that Nicolas did not go very often to Königstein again. His new friend was an innkeeper and he took the boy to help in the kitchen. After a while he was promoted to a suit of black clothes, and became a handy little waiter. Fritz lived in the garden of the hotel, and many were the kind words he got from visitors; but he never seemed very happy (I think his spirits were broken by the troubles of his young days), except when Nicolas passed him and patted his head and said, 'Good old Fritz!' and then Fritz would jump up and lick his master's hand, and follow him with his loving brown eyes.

C. A. T.



Faithful Fritz.



Jack "a bit scared" when he opened the back kitchen-door.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 57.)

CHAPTER X.

JILL generally escaped the late dinner at Hill Park. It was always a very lengthy affair, as Mr. Mottram liked a good dinner and kept a very excellent and expensive cook, so Jill had preferred to dine at Mrs. Mottram's lunch and come in to dessert; but to-day being her last day at Hill Park, and Lance being expected, she was to go in to dinner, and Mrs. Mottram's maid came to superintend her toilette. This was necessarily very simple, as she had only the clean white frock she wore on Sundays, 'made in the Ark,' as the maid declared contemptuously. But even she was forced to confess, when she had tied the broad Roman sash round Jill's waist, and fastened the string of amber beads round her neck, that the most fashionable milliner in the land could not have made a more thorough little lady of her; and Lance seemed quite of the same opinion when he arrived, for he whispered that the boys had never told him what a pretty little cousin he had.

Certainly, Jill thought, no one could help liking Lance, as Jack had said, and thought proudly how much better he looked than any one else there, though he had not diamond studs nor gorgeous rings.

Some gentlemen had arrived from London just before dinner—City men, whose talk was principally of the stocks and the prices quoted in the money market; and these, with the guests already staying in the house, made up a party of fourteen to dinner. It was Jill's first dinner-party, and she was naturally much taken up with her own behaviour on the occasion, but she was aware that Lance was getting on 'like a house a-fire,' as Jack would have said. He was sitting next Mrs. Mottram at dinner, and from time to time Jill could hear what he was saying, and once she felt quite sure that Lance must be humbugging, for she heard Mrs. Mottram say, 'Yes, so he is, a good-looking, bright boy, though I say it. Like me? Oh, Mr. Lance, I'm afraid you're a sad flatterer!'

They were both looking at Joe, who was sitting next Jill, and looking more stupid than usual, with a very red face and quite absorbed in his dinner. She felt quite angry with herself, because she caught Lance's eye just then and could not help laughing; it seemed too ridiculous that any one should call Joe bright or good-looking, but she felt that she deserved a black eye as much as ever Davy had done, and that father would have thought her horrid and mean, and she tried to make up for it to Joe by talking to him, and handing him the salt, and giving him as much room as possible for his elbows. Poor Joe! he was such a good creature, and always so kind to her, and she played draughts all the evening with him out of sheer remorse, though she would much rather have joined the circle round the piano, where Lance was delighting the ladies with some Italian peasant songs, to which he played a little guitar-like accompaniment that was very pretty and graceful, though there was very little art about it.

He seemed quite as great a favourite with the gentlemen as with the ladies, and Mr. Mottram

carried him off at last to the billiard-room, as Lance did not seem in any hurry to get home, and Jill heard him assuring Mr. Mottram that his uncle always turned in early, and that he could let himself in, and no one would sit up for him.

Jill wondered a little at this account of father's early habits, and supposed that he must have taken to them since she had been at Hill Park, for sometimes the anxious little soul had listened for father's step on the stairs far into the night, and had heard hour after hour strike on the noisy kitchen clock, and had crept to the window again and again to see the light from the uncurtained library window still shining out on the dark shrubs in the garden.

'I hope Mr. Flower was not vexed at our keeping your cousin so late last night,' Mr. Mottram said next morning; 'the time slipped away so fast I could hardly believe my eyes when I looked at my watch. That young cousin of yours is capital company, Miss Jill! and he made some of us look foolish over billiards—eh, Jones? I never saw anything better than some of his strokes.'

Mr. Jones was a little bit surly; he reckoned himself a good player, and he did not much relish being outshone by a boy: but with the others Lance seemed as popular as ever, and Mr. Mottram said he hoped he would often find his way to Hill Park.

Mr. Flower came himself to fetch Jill home in the old mouldy Shetle fly.

'When we might every bit as well have sent the child home in the brougham! and all those horses eating their heads off in the stables, and frightening one to death by being so fresh for want of proper exercise.'

Jill felt most ungratefully elated at going home, and could hardly keep her delight decently out of sight till she was fairly out of the house, and Mr. Flower had quite to apologise to Mrs. Mottram for his little girl's bright eyes and dancing step as she came down with her hat on to say good-bye.

'I am sure Jill is not ungrateful for all your great kindness.'

And then Jill, in hot compunction, threw her arms round Mrs. Mottram's neck and assured her that if she might she should come up ever so often to see her, and if it were not for father and the boys she should like to live there always.

'Why, bless your dear little heart! there's nothing to be grateful about. I'm sure, Mr. Flower, it's been a pleasure to have her; and it's for us to be grateful, for I do feel as if we never could make up for the horrid danger to the child's life. Why, I declare, sometimes in the night I wake up all of a shake, thinking what that shot might have done! And as for Joe, I don't think he'll ever go within a mile of a gun again if he can help it; and a good thing, too! But whatever he will do without Jill I can't think. He won't know what to do with himself of an evening, nor, for the matter of that, all day!'

But at last they were off, leaving Joe standing on one leg on the steps like a disconsolate pelican, and Jill was able to let her delight bubble up, unrestrained by thoughts of gratitude and propriety.

It must be acknowledged that Jill did not find home quite as perfect as she had pictured it in her homesick fancies at Hill Park, though she would not have confessed to any imperfections even under the thumb-

screw or on the rack. Was there any change about it really? she wondered. Was the house rather shabbier, and the garden untidier, and the stains of damp on the walls larger, and the cracks in the pavement wider? Was her little bed harder, and the cooking rougher, and nurse crosser? and were the boys noisier, or had she really grown into a dainty little Miss Niminy Piminy, as Jack told her when her heart failed her in the middle of a vast helping of substantial pudding at dinner?

The boys were boisterously glad to see her, and made much of her—at least Jack and Davy did, and that was always delightful, for it was so very rare. Father followed her about with his kind, gentle eyes, as if he understood, as he always did, what was passing in her mind, and once he called her as she stood, reflectively tracing the pattern of the carpet with her toe, which was not such a very easy matter, as the Ben-grove carpets were mostly reduced to grey webbing.

‘Is it really jolly to be at home, Gillyflower, in the shabby, untidy, noisy old nest? Or are you longing to be back on the lap of luxury again? Was I very cruel to come and fetch you away, little maiden?’

Such questions needed no answer, Jill felt. ‘I was only thinking, daddy,’ she said, ‘how much I should have liked to bring a present back for you and the boys, and I was trying to think what it should be. I should like Jack to have had that pony that Joe was afraid to ride, and Davy the biggest hothouse where the grapes are ripe, and Martin—I don’t quite know what—but, perhaps, one of those big book-cases in the library.’

‘And what came to my share?’

‘Why, there was one chair in the drawing-room that I always called your chair, for I knew it would be just right for you. No, you never sat down in it when you came, for I wished you to and noticed. It was much too deep for me, and when I leant back my toes went up in the air. And then there was a sofa—and oh! such a splendid reading-lamp—or the big carriage, and the pair of grey horses.’

‘Anything else in a small way?’ said Mr. Flower.

‘Oh, yes! dozens of things. I think if I once begin to choose for you, I shall want everything.’

Lance was out when Jill came home, having gone up to London for a few hours, and Jill was rather glad to have father and the boys to herself just at first.

‘What’s the matter with Martin, Jack?’

Of course, this inquiry was made in the strictest privacy, without even Davy’s presence, up in the loft over the stables, where Jack had ugly suspicions that one of the hens had a nest, and where they had gone to make a thorough investigation. Jack was cutting his initials on the beam across the middle of the loft, and was at such a critical letter in the F that Jill had to wait for an answer to her question about Martin a whole minute before he answered.

‘I don’t think,’ said Jill, a little tremulously, ‘that he’s a bit glad to see me home, and he’s hardly been up to Hill Park once since Lance came. Is he reading very hard, Jack, or has father said anything about his not going back to Radbourne?’

‘Reading! he’s hardly opened a book since Lance came. And I don’t believe if father told him (which he hasn’t) that he’s never going back to school, that he’d care.’

‘Oh, Jack!’

That final flourish needed a lot of care in the

execution, and I think Jack was rather glad of it to avoid meeting Jill’s eyes, which always coaxed a secret or a trouble out of him in a twinkling.

‘He’s taken up with Lance, and Lance can make him do exactly as he pleases. Oh, Jill, I wish sometimes that Lance had never come!’

And then Jack turned and met Jill’s eyes, and he left that elaborate F unfinished and sat down in the straw, and out came all that had been weighing on his mind. ‘It’s that going to “The Bush,” at night to play billiards, Jill. I dare say there’s no harm in it, and, of course, it’s awful fun; but it’s the doing it on the sly, and taking in the old governor that spoils it. I told you, you know, about Lance and Martin going the first afternoon, and the next evening we all three went when father thought we were in the garden all the time. We came away quite early, but a good many fellows came in—farmers, you know, and clerks from the bank, and some of the tradespeople, and watched Lance’s play—and I didn’t half like it. And then I got angry at their humbugging father when we got home, and I gave Davy a black eye, and had a regular row with Martin, and he said if I didn’t think it right I needn’t go, but there was no need to go sneaking to father, and spoiling sport.’

‘They haven’t gone again, have they?’

‘Haven’t they? I haven’t, though I wanted to awfully, and I’d have gone fast enough, only I was ashamed after what I said.’

‘Oh, Jack, I’m glad you didn’t!’

‘There’s nothing to be glad about,’ he said, hammering doggedly at a knot in the plank beside him. ‘And Davy was as savage as he could be because I wouldn’t let him go either, so we had a lively time of it. And then Lance said, if there was all this bother he’d give it up altogether, and I was awfully pleased, because it was just what I wanted, and Martin didn’t seem to mind very much either.’

‘Well?’ said Jill, for Jack stopped here, and she knew there was more to come.

‘I thought it was all right enough. We had some jolly evenings, and Lance seemed tired and used to go to bed when we did instead of sitting up a bit with father, as he used at first. You know I sleep like twenty tops when I once start, but Davy’s not so sound, and one night I felt him shaking and pounding me in a tremendous funk, saying that burglars had broken into the house, and he’d heard them outside on the path, and then the back-door open. I tumbled out of bed in a hurry and took the poker, and set off to find them, with Davy peeping over the banisters, afraid to come too.’

‘Oh, Jack, weren’t you frightened?’

‘No, I was too sleepy; but I was a bit scared when I opened the back-kitchen door and ran smack up against some one.’

‘Oh-h-h!’ in sympathetic horror from Jill.

‘It was Master Lance, as cool as a cucumber, making jokes about my bare legs and the poker, and behind him was Martin, looking a little queer and ashamed. “We’ve been out for a turn,” said Lance; “it’s a lovely night.” But I’d known Lance long enough by that time not to swallow whole all he said, so I held my tongue and thought my little thinks, and just scuttled up to bed and did not tell Davy anything about it. Martin was afraid of my telling father, so



Flying Fish.

he came next morning, and he let out that it wasn't the first time that they'd done it; and since then I've heard them do it pretty near every night.'

'And you've not told father?'

'No, I promised not. Lance has such a way of wheedling one out of one's seven senses and making black look white and white black — Hullo! where are you off to, Jill?'

'To tell father.'

But Jack had hold of her frock. 'It would be just the same as my telling father if you go right off and do it, and Martin will say I've broken my word all the same. No! wait a bit, Jill; perhaps they won't go to-night. You see they didn't go last night, because Lance was up at Hill Park, and, I dare say, if

he's been all day in London, he won't care about it to-night either, and to-morrow we'll engineer some way out of it, see if we don't. Come on! there's Davy, as hoarse as a crow, calling us. What's up?

(To be continued.)

FLYING FISH.

THERE are two kinds of flying fish, one being akin to the gurnard family, and the other bearing much resemblance to the herring; these latter being much more numerous than the first-mentioned.

The pectoral fins of both species are greatly prolonged and enlarged, and it is these that are used for flight. Both species are found only in



Michael and Petrowna

tropical and sub-tropical seas. Flying fish do not seem to leave the water in pursuit of insects as some have supposed, nor are they able to move their fins so as to direct their flight; they dart out of the water when pursued by enemies, or when alarmed by an approaching vessel. Their flight, though short, is very rapid, and it is worthy of note that they are much more frequently observed in rough weather than when there is a tranquil sea. During a breeze they frequently fall on board passing vessels. D. B.



MICHAEL AND PETROWNA.

PETROWNA VARISKA sat alone in her quiet chamber, anxiously awaiting the return of her husband. Often of late had she waited thus long after the silence of night had fallen all around; but surely never had Michael been so late before. Her dear Michael! where could he be? Could any danger have overtaken him at last? If it should be so, how could she endure to live?

Michael and Petrowna were Poles, and were at this time enduring a share of the bitterness which seemed to be the portion dealt out to that suffering nation.

Their country had just been compelled to submit to the domination of Russia; their army had been reduced, almost destroyed, by order of the Czar.

Alas! poor Michael and his gentle wife! their lot had fallen upon evil times: it would have been well-nigh impossible for them under any circumstances to have lived a life of ease; but, besides this, all Michael's sympathies were with the patriotic party who would fain throw off the Russian yoke; and from the day that this became apparent he found himself a marked man. Often, while returning to his home at night, he could hear the stealthy footfall of some Russian spy, who watched his every movement; or could discover in the suspicious glance of some neighbour that his house was under the careful observation of those who would fain compass his destruction.

One night, his long-continued absence inflicted torture upon his poor wife, who at length, in order to calm her agitation, betook herself to prayer and to the study of the Holy Book, with all its store of consolatory promises to the faithful and humble Christian.

Petrowna had been reading sufficiently long to feel a holy calm spreading over her heart, when she was suddenly and painfully aroused. Hearing a slight movement behind her, she quickly turned round, and found herself in the presence of a man whom she had good reason to dread, as a bitter enemy to her husband. He was a near relative of her own, but political and religious differences had divided them one from another; he was, besides, crafty and malicious by nature, and he held Michael and his religious and political opinions in utter abhorrence.

'Ivan Droskovitch!' she exclaimed, almost with indignation, 'how came you here? Where is my

husband? Speak, Ivan, and do not torture me with suspense.'

But the man stood unmoved, and with his arms folded, regarding the poor young wife with a look which boded no good either to her or her husband.

At length he spoke. 'Petrowna,' he said, 'had you been guided by me, you might have been spared much misery, but you chose your own lot in wedding with Michael. Your husband has been arrested by order of the Syndicate; by this time he is in chains. And you must come with me; your testimony is wanted!'

'My testimony! and against my husband!' said the indignant wife. 'Not though I should be torn to pieces would I utter a word to criminate Michael. Besides,' she added somewhat hastily, 'what could I say against him? He has done no wrong. Before God and his country, he is innocent of all evil. But I will go. I may yet help to save him.'

And, led by her cruel and unscrupulous kinsman, Petrowna appeared before the tribunal. Who does not pity the young wife, whose one unguarded word might consign to death or hopeless imprisonment the husband dear to her very heart! But many a woman in those evil days stood in Petrowna's position, and had to endure the same sad experiences. It would be tedious to relate all the questioning and brow-beating endured by the anxious wife on that terrible night!

It is enough to say that in a few hours all was over. Michael was most unjustly found guilty of conspiring against Russia, and condemned to life-long imprisonment in Siberia, Petrowna being permitted, at her own request and as a special act of grace, to accompany him in his exile. How thankful she was for this privilege, so dear to a loving wife, no tongue can tell. Gladly she made all her preparations. She saw Ivan take possession of her once happy home without a murmur, and she thought herself privileged in being one of the band of exiles.

Alas! they had not proceeded far on their way when deadly disease broke out among the prisoners, and the gentle Petrowna was the first to die. But the young couple were not long separated, for Michael and several others also succumbed to the same malady, and were buried in nameless graves.

How happy should we be that no such miserable fate can overtake any English or American home. Let us be thankful to God for the blessings of civil and religious liberty. And, while deeply valuing our own privileges, let us be filled with warm-hearted sympathy for other nations not so happily situated as we are.

D. B. McK.

MY DOG.

WHO welcomes me with glad surprise,
When sleep is banish'd from mine eyes,
And in the morning, I arise?

My Dog.

Who to my side doth softly steal,
And glances up with mute appeal,
When'er I sit down to a meal?

My Dog.

Who tore my slippers and my hats,
And ran away with all the mats,
And terrifies the pussy-cats?

My Dog.

Who humours all my 'tricky' ways,
And ev'ry little sign obeys—
And trifling trouble soon repays?

My Dog.

Who does, with one eye open, sleep,
And o'er my goods and chattels keep
A watchful guard, most true, and cheap?

My Dog.

Who hunts most eager when in quest
Of rats and mice or such like pest.
And gives its quarry little rest?

My Dog.

Who keeps the rogues and thieves at bay
When I go out by night or day,
Or guards my home? Ah! need I say—

My Dog?

Who quick forgives a hasty kick,
A stone thrown, or a cut from stick,
Or any such ill-natured trick?

My Dog.

Who looks most joyful when I'm glad,
Who looks most doleful when I'm sad,
Though I be rich or poorly clad?

My Dog.

WM. BUSH.

EARLY PROMISE.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, when a boy at the High School, Edinburgh, is said to have been remarkably active and dauntless, full of all manner of fun, and ready for any mischief. One of his chief pleasures gave a sure sign of his future occupation.

He had the name at school of being the best maker of romances amongst them. His fellows were only too ready to listen, and Scott was ready enough to tell stories at any time. Even school hours were not free from these interruptions, but the applause of his companions was held by him at that time an ample set-off against punishment for unprepared lessons. On holidays it was Scott's delight to take long country walks with a chosen companion. Each in turn recited some long story about ancient times, battles, sieges, and the deeds of brave knights. These romances were continued from day to day as they had opportunity of meeting, and the end was always long delayed. This love of romancing was no doubt a bar to Scott's progress at school. When he left, he only held the eleventh place in the Rector's class.

A. R. B.

ON THE THAMES AT WOOLWICH.

NEVER seen Woolwich! Well, you are a couple of nice youngsters to talk so big of going into the army and navy, and yet have never seen England's great arsenal and dockyard lying close to your home in London! Come along at once, both of you, the *Viven* is alongside of the pier, and the blow we

shall have as we run up there this morning will be first rate for you.'

Uncle Pat was a brick, and no mistake. He was making for the Baltic in his yacht the *Viven*, and called in at Gravesend, where Jack and I were in quarantine after scarlet fever, to see how we were getting along, and actually he devoted a day just to showing us two over Woolwich.

It was just like him; and a jolly day we had! There never was such a yacht as the *Viven*, with her great white sails and her deck holystoned, till one was afraid almost to step on it. Then the men! But I must not go off to talk about them, as it was Woolwich, not them, that Uncle Pat took us to see.

To begin with: Woolwich is a good bit nearer London, only nine miles out, instead of the two-and-twenty we were out at Gravesend; and it is such a great big place, it might almost be a part of London. It is dirty enough, at any rate, and the streets which stretch along the river bank are full of soldiers and sailors, for it owes all its importance, Uncle Pat told us, to its arsenal and dockyard.

We went over the dockyard first, and saw the two great 'dry docks,' where lots of ships were building or 'put in for repairs.' Then there was 'the basin,' 400 by 300 feet, where they launch the vessels. The man who took us over said that scores of men-of-war are launched there, and that the sheds and buildings belonging to the dockyard extend nearly half-a-mile along the river.

Jack was tremendously taken up with it all, for he is to be the sailor, you know; but I liked the arsenal ever so much the best. It was splendid, and made one feel ever so proud to belong to a country that could turn out such 'guns' (I should have called them 'cannon' before I went there), and shells, and bombs, and muskets. The Armstrong guns pleased me most, but not many of these are cast at Woolwich, but are only brought there to be finished off. Then there was the foundry with the great furnaces, and the men who worked in them looking like evil spirits, with their bare arms and masks over their faces. One of the furnaces would absorb nineteen tons of metal, they said, but I did not quite know what this meant. What I liked best was the metal being run out into the moulds in a glowing stream of fire. There was the laboratory, too, where all the experiments are made; and the factory, where all the gun-carriages and ambulance-waggon are turned out. Didn't the machinery do the sawing, and turning, and planing, and dove-tailing, just about neatly, and the 'hydraulic power' put the things together well? I wish Jack's fingers and mine would do *our* things as well.

We saw the Royal Artillery Barracks, with the parade nearly a mile long, and the great brass gun from Bhuttpore.

Uncle Pat was getting in a hurry to be off when we came to the Military Academy, where I mean to go some day when I am a cadet. I could have stopped there all the afternoon, but Uncle Pat wanted to be off, so we had to go back to the *Viven*, and had a quick run back to Gravesend. Jack and I have done nothing since but talk of all we saw, and what we shall do when he is a naval cadet and I a military one.



On the Thames at Woolwich.



"Martin!" she called softly; "Martin!"

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 76.)

CHAPTER XI.



WONDER why father didn't like 'Lance going up to Hill Park?' Jack said. It was a tremendous relief to him to have some one to tell his doubts and wonders to, and whenever Davy was out of the way that afternoon he poured them out into Jill's ready ears. 'Lance kept on proposing it, but whenever there was any talk of his going up to see you, father put in his oar and stopped it. Martin thought it was because the Mottrams are vulgar sort of people. There, Jill, you needn't gobble like a turkey-cock! For my part,' said Jack, 'I very much prefer vulgar people as long as they're rich. But I think father was afraid of his humbugging them; and I guess he was hard at it last evening—wasn't he? He was well in for it I could see in the cricket-field, but I dare say they liked it, so I don't see why any one else should mind; but father seemed quite put out at his going to dine, and as for Martin he was as cross as a bear. But I say, Jill, didn't they keep it up late last night, just about! Of course we went off to bed, but Martin was in such a fidget he would not let a fellow sleep; but I could hear him banging in and out of bed, and going out on the landing to hear if Lance had come home. It was past three when he came in, and it struck four before they came upstairs, and I fancy the governor had been giving him a regular jaw; but you might as well jaw a tom-cat as Lance, for I heard him whistling that "Tra-la-la" song of his in his bedroom a minute or two afterwards, as gay as a lark. Hullo! who's this?'

It was Joe Mottram, and he apologised so humbly for coming, and had brought such a basket of peaches, that Jack and Davy were quite civil to him, and Jill was so used to him by this time that it only seemed natural to have him pottering about after her; and only Martin scowled at him, and growled out something very uncomplimentary when Joe stumbled over his outstretched legs and came floundering at full length on the ground before him.

'Daddy,' Jill said, with a little hot colour on her cheek and an indignant light in her eyes: 'daddy, they've been very good to me, haven't they? and he can't help being ugly and clumsy.'

'Eh, what, Gillyflower?' said father, who had not seen the episode. But he seemed to understand the situation directly, and came out and talked to Joe, and asked him to stay to tea with them with a courtesy which was the most effectual rebuke to Martin.

And Joe was only too delighted to stop, and eat thick slices of bread and butter and chunks of heavy cake, washed down with weak tea, as if he were used to no better fare, and would have been quite oblivious of dinner-time if Jill had not remembered that it was approaching, and insisted on Joe going off.

It was just as Joe was leaving that Lance came home. He was in the most beaming of good tempers, and there was something so radiant and sunny about

him that the most determined, hard-set disapproval was forced to melt a little, though, perhaps, merely on the surface, under its influence. Jill had hardened her heart against him to a regular little stone after her conversation with Jack in the loft, and she could not imagine how Jack could go on liking him when he was leading Martin into such horrid deceit. But even she found herself smiling as Lance came straight to father before speaking to either of them, and asked him how he was, and hoped he was not the worse for having been kept up so late the night before, and said he was awfully sorry for having been the cause of it.

He had brought some cigars as a present for father, and Jill, who had never seen her father smoke, looked a little disappointed when the parcel was opened; but father smelt and handled them as if he appreciated them, though he laid them down again with a little sigh.

'They must have cost a pretty penny, Lance,' he said.

And Lance shrugged his shoulders, and said, 'I would not have brought you rubbish.' Which went far to win Jill's heart.

'I have brought some cigars for you, Jill, too,' he said, with a laugh. 'It's quite the fashion for ladies to smoke, I assure you. And *you* need not be afraid of them, Davy, for they won't make you sick unless you take too many of them.' For these were made of chocolate.

Lance's return seemed to have brought back Martin's good temper; and Jack and Davy were so full of boisterous spirits that Jill was not surprised when father moved out of the noisy circle and went indoors. And then they had such a game of hide-and-seek about the garden. Lance had dined in town and did not seem a bit tired, and he was as fond of play as any one of them, though the night before he had seemed quite grown up, and in his element among grown-up people; and Martin, who for the last one or two holidays had begun to assume slightly grown-up airs, and had been rather above what he called 'romping,' threw aside all such tiresome notions after Lance's example, and ran and dashed and bounced out with the best of them, and the old garden at Bengrove rang again with screams of laughter till Mr. Flower smiled in sympathy as he heard it.

Like Lance? Of course Jill did! When you have pursued any one three times round the house and into the stable, and along the wall of the pigstyes, and caught him at last on the roof of the henhouse, you will be much too out of breath to dislike any one; and your liking will, almost of necessity, be a warm one.

Jill forgot all about billiards. Who could think of such when they could play hide-and-seek? And as for deceit, if there is any pleasure in taking people in, Jill had it to the full as she crouched under the great rhubarb leaves, and Lance, Martin, Davy, and Jack passed almost within touch of her and never saw her: and when supper-time came it was worth all the rest of the fun put together to hear Jack say, 'Isn't it jolly to have Jill at home again? We've not had such fun since she went.'

A momentary recollection came back to her mind

when Lance got up and said 'Good night' to Mr. Flower, with a great yawn, even before they did; but he was evidently very tired, and so, for the matter of that, was Jill, who had not had so much running about for a long time, and she was not sorry to follow Lance's example and go up to her little bedroom, which seemed to have grown smaller since she had been away. She was too sleepy, however, to miss the comforts of Hill Park or to notice the hardness of her bed, and was asleep as soon as her head touched the pillow.

She could not have been asleep long when she woke with a start, either from some mice, or from the moon pouring in on her through the uncurtained window. She had a dim impression in the first confusion of sudden waking that it was Jack's round face staring in at her instead of the great full moon; but she had not time to laugh at the fancy when the sound of a door closing softly brought back to her mind Jack's story of Lance and Martin going out at night, and she jumped out of bed and opened her door just in time to see two figures stealing noiselessly along the passage, and in the moonlight through the window at the top of the stairs she recognised Lance and Martin.

'Martin!' she called softly; 'Martin!' But if he heard he took no notice, and the next minute they were out of sight.

What should she do? Through Jack's open door she could hear very evident sounds of peaceful slumber, and she knew by experience that when he was once off it took time and patience to wake him. Father had not come up to bed yet, for the door of his bedroom stood open and dark.

Jill made a few steps towards the staircase to go and tell him, and there stopped and hesitated. He would be so vexed and sorry, and it seemed like sneaking, and Martin might think Jack had been telling tales, and there would be a horrid scene and every one would be miserable. If only she could stop Martin it would save all that; and Jill hurried back to her room and put on some clothes with eager, trembling hands, and threw a shawl over her head and stole downstairs as quickly and as noiselessly as she could, and found her way to the back-kitchen door which Jack had told her was the way that was generally used. But in spite of all her speed, when she stood outside in the clear, still moonlight, no sound of the fugitives was to be heard, and she stood with her hand still on the latch of the door, half doubting if it was not after all a dream, and if she had not better get back to bed again as fast as she could.

It was not really very late: ten had only just struck out on the old church clock; but Bengrove was half a mile out of Shettle, and so out of the way of the few noises in the streets of that sleepy little place, and it was all deadly silent.

Jill had never been out by herself so late before; it seemed as if there were no one in the world except herself and that great white moon, riding so serenely far away among the little fleecy clouds; and even the moon had lost that likeness to Jack which might have been a comfort to her in her solitude, and looked cold, and severe, and unsympathising.

All the familiar objects round the back-door looked changed and unnatural, and the slimy track of a snail

along the wall seemed to the child's eyes to be some ghostly writing with a mysterious meaning. It did not add to her peace of mind that the day before she had been telling Joe about the Flower ghost in the ravine, and, encouraged by his open mouth and startling eyes of terror, had added little horrible details to touch up the points of the narrative; and these now came back to her mind in speedy retribution, and a slight rustle among the ivy sent her heart into her mouth, and herself nearly flying back to bed again. But just then she caught a glimpse of the light from the library window, which seemed almost a charm against spiritual terrors, and a few steps round the house brought her in sight of father himself, sitting at his writing-table, and the first sight of his face took all the cowardice out of her, for it looked so white and worn that she felt she could face a whole regiment of grisly ghosts rather than let him have any anxiety that she could spare him; and she went on resolutely to the gate, avoiding too close a scrutiny of dark corners and mysterious shadows, for she felt even now that her bravery was not to be trusted to stand many tests.

She had not any clear plan of action, only to get to Martin somehow or somewhere, and bring him back, and I do not know what she would have done if, before she had gone half-a-dozen steps from the gate, she had not run right up against him under the trees by the roadside.

Jill never rightly understood how he came to be there, and why Lance had gone on without him. It was no time for explanations there, and afterwards Martin did not like the faintest allusion to that night. They had mutually frightened one another by their sudden meeting, and Jill was too breathless to do anything but cling to his arm and sob out 'Martin! Martin!' While Martin was angry with himself for being so startled, and with her for coming so quietly through the gate all in white; for the shawl she had thrown over her was white, and, without intending it, she had acted like a very creditable little ghost.

'What on earth are you doing at this time of night?' he said. 'I suppose Jack has set you on to spy after me?'

'No, he hasn't,' sobbed Jill; 'I heard you go out, and I knew father would—'

'Nonsense!' he interrupted, angrily, twisting his arm roughly out of her grasp. 'Now, Jill, I don't want to make you cry, or be unkind, you know, but I won't have you and Jack interfering; so you just cut back to bed again like a good girl, and leave me to mind my own business. You can go and sneak to father if you like.'

And off Martin went with much dignity, whistling to show how little it affected him that he was leaving Jill sobbing as if her heart would break at the gate.

The gate at Bengrove was large and heavy, but Jill was well used to it. Perhaps she was not quite so strong as she had been before her accident, or perhaps it was only that she was wretched, and out of heart, but somehow she let the gate slip, and it swung against her as she went through, and knocked her over. She had only put on her bedroom slippers in her hasty dressing, and one of them came off now, and her foot was scratched and cut by the gravel and



Fallen by the Way.



Joe judging the Plants.

the gate. It was a very trifling thing, and often in her adventures with the boys she had thought nothing of a much more severe hurt, but just now it seemed the last straw that broke the camel's back, and she gave a little despairing cry which, low as it was, reached Martin's ears, and brought him back in a second.

'Why, Jill!' he said, 'Gillyflower!' with a world of compunction in his tone; 'what's the matter? Are you hurt?'

And then he picked her up from where she sat forlornly on the gravel.

'Barefooted! Oh, Jill, you poor little beggar!'

Anyhow, Jill had got her arms tight round Martin's neck now, and if he went to 'The Bush,' or got into any other mischief, he must take her with him, for nothing should make her let go, and her sobbing was more than half relief.

She hardly knew what Martin was doing till she found herself sitting on the kitchen table, and him gently disengaging her arms from his neck. 'There,' he said, 'don't be afraid; I'm not going to run away.' He spoke between his teeth, as if he were still angry, but not with her, and she let go her hold, and sat where he had put her, watching while he struck a light, and then raked the kitchen fire together, and set on the kettle. Then he came back and examined the wounded foot.

'Oh, Martin, it's nothing! It doesn't hurt a bit.'

But nothing would serve him but that he must bring a basin of warm water and bathe the scratches, and, as he did so, Jill fancied that a drop hotter than the water in the basin fell on her foot; but Martin's head was bent down, and, besides, why should he have been crying over a scratched foot? And when he raised his head she was afraid to look too closely at the troubled, cloudy eyes, for Martin's very love and tenderness were apt to be stormy.

He carried her upstairs, and as he set her down on her bed, on which the moonlight poured as serenely as ever, he spoke with a great effort in a jerky, sharp way, as if the words hurt him: 'I'm never going again, Jill. I shall tell father all about it. You needn't tell Jack.'

(To be continued.)

A SWISS STORY.

IT is late in the summer. Already the snow-storms are beginning to sweep across the slopes where a few weeks ago the cattle were enjoying the sunshine and green pastures. The herds are being driven lower down the mountains every day, and another fortnight will see them in their winter quarters in yonder sheltered valley.

Old Pierre makes a trip down from the little lonely chalet, where he has been living for nearly three months, to bid his wife be ready for the return of her family from the mountains. She could not leave the village this summer, poor body! for the rough paths are too steep for her feeble limbs, so she has stayed behind with Estelle, her granddaughter, to keep her company. Pierre is heartily welcomed, but old Marie cannot help rebuking him for coming down alone.

'The paths are dangerous,' she says, 'and you are old. It was Etienne who should have brought the news, and not you.'

And when he leaves the chalet, she stands in the balcony watching him until he is out of sight, with a heart full of anxiety, for she knows only too well the perils to which the peasants of these mountainous districts are exposed.

'We will pray for him, Estelle,' she says, 'that the good God may be with him and keep his feet from falling.'

Etienne and his sister, Louise, begin to look out some hours later for their father's return, but though the mists are beginning to gather and the twilight is coming on, they can see nothing of the well-known figure. Can he have stayed in the village? they ask each other; and Louise feels sure that he has done so.

'He will come up in the morning. The mother, doubtless, persuaded him to remain, for she is full of fears for him.'

So they close the door of the chalet, and Etienne brings out his carving and Louise her knitting, and for a while they sit chatting comfortably enough. But presently a feeling of uneasiness creeps into Etienne's mind, and going to the door, he looks out. How grand the mountains look in the clear moonlight! Below, the white mist hides the valley from his view, but all around him are the snowy peaks shining like silver. The night is very still, and, as he stands in the doorway, he fancies that he hears a faint far-off cry. He listens attentively. Some traveller may have lost his way, and be wandering about in sore need of help and guidance. He hears the sound once more, and, turning back into the chalet for a flask which he slips into his pocket, he sets out without delay on his errand of mercy.

It is half an hour before he succeeds in finding the lost man, and then how his heart leaps, for it is his own father! The old man had not strayed far out of the path, but being surrounded by the blinding mist he had made a false step, and injured his foot so seriously that walking without assistance was impossible.

'I had little hope that thou wouldst hear me,' he says, 'but the good God surely carried my voice to thee.'

And old Marie agrees with him when she hears the story. Was she not on her knees at that very hour praying for her husband? H. L. T.

JOE THE GARDENER.

I'VE no patience with the lad,' said old Ben Green, the village shoemaker, 'and I don't see what's to be done with him.'

Poor Joe had just left school, and his father was trying to teach him the cobbler's art, but the lad hated the very sight of the tools and leather, and as his father said, 'his fingers might be all thumbs, for the good they were to him!' He was not an idle boy, or badly disposed in any way, and his stupidity in the shoemaking line troubled him quite as much as it troubled his father.

'I shall never mend a boot decently,' he said to

himself, 'let alone make one. I'm good for nothing but digging and such-like.'

And as time went on Ben began to be of the same opinion. 'Set him to plant potatoes, or stick a row of peas, and he'll do it right enough; but as for shoes! And we've shod the village for five generations!'

'It's my family he takes after,' said the mother; 'they all worked with a spade one way or another. The lad's a good lad, and there's more in him than you give him credit for. Let him follow his own likings.'

So, after a great deal of grumbling on the part of Mr. Green, and a great deal of soothing and coaxing on the part of his wife, Joe was sent to the Hall as 'boy-of-all-work,' his chief duty being to assist the gardener. Now he was happy. He was tall and strong for his age, and the way in which he dug, and raked, and weeded, won old Johnson's heart in less than a fortnight.

'He's real fond of his work,' said the old man to the Squire's wife. 'If it's only wheeling rubbish, he seems to put his soul into it. He's a born gardener, is Joe Green!'

The years rolled by, and when Johnson died no one was surprised to hear that Joe Green had stepped into his shoes, and was to have the neat little lodge to live in. He could do more than plant potatoes by this time. The Squire's vineries and his rose-garden were the finest in the neighbourhood, 'thanks to that clever fellow, Green;' and it was no unusual thing for the first prizes at the county flower-show to be carried off by 'Joseph Green, gardener to George Mayhew, Esq.'

But the day on which his mother's pride rose to its fullest height was that of the village show, when Joe was asked to judge the plants sent for exhibition.

'Which is the same,' she said, 'as saying that there's no one in these parts that knows as much about them as he does; and to think of our Joe being thought of like that!'

Even Ben was satisfied when this honour was conferred upon his son, and he was never afterwards heard to grumble at the stupidity which had hindered Joe from following the trade of his forefathers.

T.

MEAL-TIMES.

FRENCH customs, like our own, have greatly changed in the course of time. In the reign of Francis I. they had a proverb to this effect:—

'To rise at five and dine at nine,
To sup at five, retire at nine,
Will make one live till ninety and nine.'

The Dauphin Louis, son of Charles VI., is said by one author to have shortened his life by dining at three and supping at midnight. Under Henry IV., the dinner-hour was eleven or twelve, an hour still retained in many parts of France. But artificial light has changed the habits of dwellers in towns, and Royal personages now dine at an hour when their ancestors would have been preparing for bed.

A. R. B.

THE SLY DUCK.



R. WOOD, the eminent naturalist, gives us a comical account of a battle he once saw between a duck and a cock. There had been some food thrown out in the farmyard, and the duck was gobbling up the corn much faster than the cock thought polite or suitable.

The duck, in fact, was shovelling it down with his broad bill, as if he meant to beat all the barn-door fowls put together, when suddenly

the cock gave him to know he was eating too much by a sharp peck.

The duck was far too cunning to make a fight of it, so he meekly crouched down, and when the cock's attention was given to the food, the duck crept behind him, and gave the cock a hard blow. The cock turned sharply round, but seeing the duck look innocent, he seemed to suppose the blow had come from a stray stone, and went on eating faster than ever, to make up for lost time. Then came a second punch from the duck, on which the cock jumped fiercely round; but, eyeing the duck sternly, he saw no evil in her placid looks. However, he appeared now to be suspicious, and as he picked up the corn he looked at the duck out of the corner of his eye. Soon the duck waddled round and dealt the cock a blow from the rear. The cock turned quickly round and caught the enemy in the act. He flew at the duck in a passion, but the duck squatted down, tucked her head under her wing, and let the cock spend his wrath on her.

The cock stood in triumph on the duck's back, and raised a strain of victory; after which he returned to his dinner.

The duck took her head from under her wing, opened first one eye and then the other, made another sly assault, and prepared, as before, for the cock's charge.

This went on for some time, until the cock was fairly wearied out with the duck's tactics, and left her to eat the barley and wag her tail in peace. G.

THE TOY-MAN.

WHO wants a handsome watch and chain,
A pair of scissors or a locket,
A looking-glass for ladies vain,
A knife or pencil for the pocket?

I've straps and buckles, as you see,
With many another glittering treasure;
No cheaper wares than mine can be,
And sure to give unfailing pleasure.

Then come, young sir, and spend your pence,
I'll give good value for your money;
I'd recommend a watch and chain,
Because I see you have not any.'

But Willy was a generous boy,
And thought of little sister Mary:
He bought a little crystal cup,
Which held fresh seed for her canary.

D. B.



The Toy-man.



Jack finding Jill's Shoe.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from p. 86.)

CHAPTER XII.



WELL! Jack said next morning at breakfast, producing a small slipper from the pocket of his coat, 'the cats certainly do kick up a row at night sometimes, and I've often threatened to have a shot at them, but they must have been something mountainous last night for Jill to have shied her shoe right out of the front gate at them. I found it there just now, and I've been hunting ever since for the corpses of the victims; but you must have smashed them all to smithereens, Jill, by that tremendous shot of yours. Round the corner too! and slick through the gate! I reckon they won't be in a hurry again to come within half a mile of you. Whew!' He ended with a whistle, for Jill was kicking at him under the table and making signals to him to change the subject, and Martin's face was like a thundercloud, and Lance was looking from one to the other, as if he were in a puzzle.

'That sounds like Cinderella,' he said; 'and I expect Jill was going off to a ball in her pumpkin coach. Tell us all about it, Jill. Did you carry off Martin with you? He looks as if he had been up to some mischief last night, instead of being in bed like a good boy at ten.'

But Lance's words seemed to have lost their power this morning to charm Martin, and he got up rather impatiently and said he would go and see if father would have some more tea.

Mr. Flower had had a very bad night, and was so ill in the morning that he did not come down to breakfast, and was so weak and low that he could hardly bear the sound of the boys' voices or their footsteps, never very fairy-like upon the stairs, and Gillyflower reigned supreme in his room. He was in no condition to hear Martin's story, nor to see Lance, who also wanted to talk to him, and Jill persuaded the boys to go off on a fishing expedition which they had planned the night before, though both Lance and Martin went unwillingly, and Jack was not much inclined for it without Jill.

There was nothing Jill liked better than a fishing day in the ravine, and it was such a splendid day for it,

'With the wind in the west
When the fish bite best.'

And she fingered her rod rather longingly before she put it away decidedly in the corner, for Gillyflower could certainly not be spared to-day when father was ill.

It was a long business starting for a fishing day; the tackle had to be collected from the four quarters of the globe to which it was always dispersed after using it, with a reckless want of consideration for the next occasion when it would be required; there was bait to be concocted of specially enticing sorts, and

worms to be dug, and, last but not least, nurse to be coaxed into a good temper, and induced to pack a basket of provisions to support exhausted nature.

Davy generally undertook the last department, as he was nurse's special favourite; but an eye had to be kept on his packing arrangements, as he was not always sufficiently particular in keeping the food for the fishes and for the human species distinct, and worms are not agreeable neighbours for sandwiches.

But to-day Lance saw to the stores, and Jill found him sitting on the kitchen table giving his orders as if he were master of all he surveyed, while nurse, as mild as a moonbeam, opened cupboards and overhauled jam-pots as if she never had any wish except to oblige; and when the basket was supplied with all the delicacies Bengrove could supply, Lance sent Davy off to the confectioner's at Shettle, to lay out a shilling at his discretion on the fly-blown niceties under the yellow muslin in the window.

'How jolly it must be to be so rich!' said Davy, much impressed by the lavish extravagance of such a purchase.

There was a tradition among the young Flowers that there was fish of all sorts, of fabulous sizes, in the stream running through the ravine, which tradition was certainly not founded on anything they had ever succeeded in getting out of it; but monsters had been seen among the weeds which no one ever suggested might have been stones, and Jill's rod had once been broken off short in her hand, which they all agreed could not possibly have been caused by catching her hook in a stump and pulling too energetically. It in no way shook their faith or discouraged future attempts that time after time they only carried home in triumph half-a-dozen or so of little fish that nurse persisted disrespectfully in calling 'minnows,' and declared were not worth cooking for supper.

There is a saying that 'there are as good fish in the seas as ever came out of it,' and if this were not also true of the stream in the ravine, it could not justly claim the high character as a fishing-place which the young Flowers gave it.

Jill at any rate had unlimited faith, which was not to be shaken by sitting for hours watching the fat green-and-red float bob and tremble and dip without anything to show for it in the end. She felt a little bit dull as she turned back into the house without the boys, and went to find nurse and try and devise something that father could fancy for his dinner with the regretful remembrance of all the nice things that were lavished upon her at Hill Park; but she found nurse taken up with a trouble of her own, sitting on the step of the pantry-door, rocking backwards and forwards, reading a letter that the postman had just delivered, which had been delayed in its arrival from sundry eccentricities in the direction.

'As I might have known, Miss Jill, as something was wrong, with the kitchen clock stopping and coffins popping out of the kitchen fire constant! And when I see the postman coming up the path, I said to Mary Ann, "Dear me!" said I.'

'But what's the matter?' interrupted Jill.

'There now, Miss Jill, you've no patience, as did ought to be more feeling with your father enjoying such poor health.'

Jill knew from experience that nurse was not to be

hurried, and that she would not come to the point of the story any quicker for interruptions; but at last it came out that her mother had had a stroke, and nurse's brother, who lived at home, had written to ask her to come as soon as she could to look after the old woman.

'It's plain as he didn't think as it will be long first,' nurse said, with that strangely calm calculation of the chances of life and death to be found among poor people, even when their feelings are most deeply concerned. 'She've always been a strong woman, but she were broken terrible the last time I see her, and that's three years ago, and she've had a deal of trouble, let alone thirteen children. And here's master ill, and Master Lance in the house, and the holidays not half over, and Mary Anne no more head on her shoulders than that broomstick!'

'Oh! don't think of that,' said Jill. 'I dare say we can manage somehow, and you will not be very long gone. And Jack said Mary Anne got on very well when you were up at Hill Park with me.'

'And a fine state I found everything in when I came home!' said nurse; 'the whole place upside down, and not a thing in its right place! But that's just what some folk likes; and it's not much use slaving and fretting one's heart out to keep things straight, and then to be told as one can very well be done without!'

Jill had to do a lot of coaxing and soothing to persuade this contrary woman, first, that she was perfectly indispensable, and that they would all come to fearful grief in her absence, and then that she could go by the first train; and when this was settled she went up to father, feeling a little bit pleased, and a good deal alarmed at the prospect of such freedom from nurse's tyranny.

She felt at least two inches taller when she had seen nurse's Paisley shawl and band-box tied up in a blue handkerchief disappear out of the gate after a flood of disconnected injunctions to Jill, which were all muddled together in the girl's brain almost before nurse was out of sight; but she went with great dignity into the kitchen, jingling the keys in an impressive manner, to tell Mary Anne to warm the broth for father, and found that young woman in the delightful rebound from nurse's iron rule sitting in the kitchen window, deep in the horrors of a penny novel that had been in her pocket for the last week without her finding an opportunity to have more than a tantalising dip into it. But one comfort was that Mary Anne had not the same objection as nurse to other people doing her work, so Jill was at liberty to warm the broth herself and carry it up; and she felt that each spoonful that father took was a compliment to her powers of cooking, and she was almost disposed to attribute his being better in the afternoon to the virtue of that broth.

She had just got him downstairs on to the sofa, and she and Mary Anne were making his bed, when she heard wheels on the carriage drive, and, flying to the window, saw the Park Hill carriage at the front door, and heard the footman trying vainly to ring the bell which had been disabled for months.

'Tell them father's ill,' Jill said, lending a hand to improve Mary Anne's appearance, pulling her cap

straight, and turning her apron clean side outwards, and supplying with pins the place of absent buttons. 'Say that father is ill and I can't be spared.'

She took it for granted that it was Mrs. Mottram come to take her out for a drive, and she was surprised to find when Mary Anne returned that it was Mr. Mottram come to see Mr. Flower on particular business.

'I told him master was ill, so he asked to see you, and I showed him into the dining-room, and give him a chair to set down; and if Master Jack hadn't been and left some of them 'orrid worms on it, and along of being in a fluster-like I upset the pot they was in, and there they was all a-creepy crawling about! And just then master hisself opens the door and looked terrible put out at the room being in such a caddle, and he've took Mr. Mottram into his lorry; and there's that footman laughing fit to kill himself about the worms on the chair, the impudent rascal!'

Mr. Mottram stayed a long time talking to Mr. Flower, and when he left father told Jill that he had come to ask him to let Joe read with him for a few months.

'It appears that your friend Joe is not very quick at school, and they are not going to send him back to Sherley, but want him coached up a bit at home before they send him anywhere else. But, you see, little Jill, I'm not up to it now, and I could not undertake it. But how do you think it would do, Jill, for Martin to do it instead? You see, I cannot afford to send him back to Radbourne, and if he coaches Joe Mottram he could still have time to keep up his own reading, so that we need not quite give up the idea of Oxford some day, and Mr. Mottram would pay a liberal salary.'

'Oh, father!'—Jill's eyes were large and round with excitement—'would Mr. Mottram agree?'

'He seemed very pleased with the idea, and I am to talk it over with Martin. I think, perhaps, he would rather have had Lance, but I don't expect Master Lance knows more Latin and Greek than Joe does, if as much. Perhaps after all that was a lucky shot of Joe Mottram's as far as we are concerned! It is an opening for Martin that I never hoped for, and a mutual accommodation, too, for Martin is quite able to work up that boy, and perhaps all the better for being nearer his age and fresh from school; so I do not feel that I am placing myself under any great obligation to Mr. Mottram.'

It was quite a long time since father had talked so hopefully, and seemed so hopeful; and Jill was a sympathetic listener, even though she did not understand all the anxieties that had been weighing on her father's mind, and how cheering a ray of light is coming unexpectedly into a dark prospect.

(To be continued.)

WHICH WAS THE FOOL?

THERE was once a certain lord who kept a fool in his house, as many a great man did in the old days, to amuse by jests and antics. His master gave this fool a staff and charged him to keep it till he should meet with some one who was a greater fool



Which was the Fool?

than himself; and if he met with such a one to deliver it over to him.

Not many years after his lord was on his death-bed. His fool came to see him, and was told by the dying master that he must shortly leave him.

'And whither wilt thou go?' said the fool.

'Into another world,' replied the lord.

'And wilt thou come back again within a month?'

'No.'

'Within a year?'

'No.'

'What then?'

'Never.'

'Never! And what provision hast thou made for thy entertainment whither thou goest?'

'None at all.'

'What!' said the fool; 'none at all? Then take my staff. Art thou going away for ever and yet no preparation for the journey? I am not guilty of such folly as that.'



A DOG-GROOM.

THE following story is told of Dr Smith, of the Queen's County Militia, Ireland, who had a riding-horse, which, though spirited, was at the same time wonderfully docile. The doctor also had a fine Newfoundland dog named Caesar. These animals were strangely fond of each other. The dog was kept in the stable at night, and always lay beside the horse. When Dr. Smith

visited his patients on horseback, Caesar took care of the horse whilst the master was in a house, the doctor giving him the bridle to hold in his mouth. The horse stood quietly, even in that crowded city, beside his friend Caesar. If the house of the next patient was near at hand, the doctor did not think it worth while to mount, but called to the horse and Caesar, when both obeyed, Caesar carrying the bridle, and holding it as before, at the door of the house, where both quietly stood until the doctor came out again.

The horse was as obedient to his friend Cæsar as he was to his groom. The doctor would go to the stable accompanied by his dog, put the bridle upon his horse, and giving the reins to Cæsar, bid him take the horse to the water. Both understood what was to be done, and off Cæsar would trot, followed by the horse capering and playing with the dog all the way to the brook, about 300 yards distant from the stable. Dog and horse went straight to the stream, and after the horse had quenched his thirst both returned in the same playful manner as they had gone.

The doctor sometimes would tell Cæsar to make the horse leap over this stream, which might be about six feet broad. The dog, by a kind of bark, and leaping up towards the horse's head, showed him what he wished, and he would canter off, preceded by Cæsar, and take the leap in a neat and regular style. The dog was then desired to bring him back again, and it was speedily done in the same manner. On one occasion Cæsar lost hold of the reins, and as soon as the horse cleared the leap he trotted up to his dog-groom, who took hold of the bridle and led him through the water quietly.

COST OF TELEGRAMS.

IF you were travelling or residing on the Continent, and your father at home were to fall dangerously ill—if he were indeed to be sick nigh unto death, you would perhaps be summoned home by the flashing throb of the telegraph in a short, pointed sentence like the following: 'Come home, directly; your father is very ill.' Here are eight words,—what would they cost? That depends entirely on your whereabouts.

In Belgium you could read the summons at the cost of 1s. 4d. It would be 4d. more if you breathed French air. If you dwelt down among the Dutchmen, your message would cost a florin. Did you reside in Sweden, it would be 2s. 4d.; while at Geneva, Berlin, Copenhagen, or among the Norsemen's fiords, you would get your message for 2s. 8d. The postman at Vienna would charge you 3s.; the Hungarian or Italian, 4d. more. In Spain you would pay 4s.; in Portugal, 4d. more. From Greece you could be summoned for a crown, and were you in Turkey it would cost 4d. extra. Supposing, however, you were in Russia, 6s. would have to be paid ere you could read the unwelcome news of your father's illness and of your need to cross the snows for England without a moment's delay. G. S. O.

A CURIOUS USE OF BELLS.

AN old historian says that in his day it was the custom at Paris, whenever a thunderstorm came on, to ring the great bell 'at the Abbey of St. Germain, which they do believe makes it cease.' Nor was this habit confined to the French alone, for he goes on to say that in Wiltshire, 'when it thundered and lightened, they did ring St. Adelm's Bell, at Malmesbury Abbey.' He also adds these words: 'The curious do say that the ringing of bells exceedingly disturbs spirits.' A. R. B.

A BRAVE LADY.

From the French.



MADAME ERVINS was brave. At night she did not tremble when a piece of furniture creaked, or a cat awoke her by wailing.

One day she was expected at her country-house, situated about a league from the little town where she lived. The road passed through a large forest. The fancy entered her head to cross it alone. She said to herself, that it would be pleasant to follow her own thoughts in the great silence of the wood, to listen to the echo of her steps, to gaze at the silvery rays of the moon, to see her shadow thrown upon the path; so she started for the forest. A little remnant of daylight remained, which lightened her. She walked on pensively; she looked at the beautiful autumnal leaves with their thousand tints, from the deepest brown to the palest yellow: some were cracked and shrivelled; others, entire skeletons, showed nothing but their lace-like filaments. Oh, how beautiful it was in this forest, with its avenues of green velvet, its oaks with their gnarled trunks; its ash-trees with their white satin bark, sometimes speckled with black, like ermine fur! But soon these things were nothing more than a dark mass. It was the hour when you stumble over every root on the ground, and when each branch of a tree is like a long arm, when each glow-worm seems like a shining eye.

Madame Ervins walked on quietly, admiring the golden spangles of the stars, when she thought she heard the twigs of a tree agitated, as if moved hands had pushed aside the branches. She said to herself,—

'It is no doubt a frightened hare;' and she continued her walk.

At the end of a few minutes it seemed to her that other footsteps besides her own were making the autumnal leaves to crackle. She advanced rapidly, and there was still a strange rustling behind her among the dead leaves. But soon she breathed more freely; she saw glistening in the shade the lights of her house. Only a few steps more and she would reach the border of the wood. All of a sudden, two large hands grasped her shoulders in their iron grip, and a hoarse voice cried to her,—

'Your money or your life!'

She felt a shudder at first; but she said to herself,—

'I must be firm;' and she was firm. 'With firmness,' thought she, 'I may be saved.'

'Your money or your life!' repeated a hollow voice.

'I have no money.'

'Ah! you have no money, Madame Ervins?' said the brigand, shaking his fist in her face.

'Do you know me?' cried she.

'You have no money!' continued he; 'you, the great lady at the rich house? But you have there bread for a hundred men in the statues of your park and in the camellias of your garden!'

'Leave me my hand at liberty, and I will prove to you that I have not even the smallest piece of money.'

'Money!' cried he; 'or I will kill you!'

'You do not dream of killing me! I am not

afraid;’ and the arm of the woman did not tremble in the hand of the brigand. ‘You want my gold, and not my corpse. What would you do with it? Blood has not the value of money.’

‘Ah! you refuse your money! Well, say farewell to your vast domains, then;’ and he looked for something under his coat.

Just then a slight noise was heard near them. The brigand trembled; Madame Ervins cried for help. The noise approached; the leaves rustled; a little trembling ran through the leaves, and soon a body of some kind came into sight. They each raised a cry; the one of joy, the other of fear. At this moment the moon shone out, and they saw a deer fleeing into the underwood.

‘I am still your master, madame,’ said the brigand. ‘Give me your purse, or to-night you will sleep in the forest.’

Already Madame Ervins had recovered her presence of mind. She saw her danger; and she said to herself, that this man could gain nothing by killing her. She recovered her composure.

‘Let us make an end of the matter,’ said she.

With the hand he had let go she turned out her large pockets, for she wore the pockets of a grandmother; and the brigand found them as empty as the purse of a peasant.

‘Nothing!’ said he, sulkily; ‘not even a jewel! But is it not possible,’ cried he, in a rage, ‘that you are hiding gold in your dress? Oh! I will not let you go: no, here you shall remain.’

Madame Ervins did not believe that this man would still keep her back. Her position became serious. She reflected for some instants, then she said to him,—

‘Let me go; wait for me at the border of the wood, and I will return alone, bringing some money.’

‘You are deceiving me! you will not return!’ cried he.

‘You believe, then, that I am afraid? How much do you want?’

The brigand looked at her, stupefied.

‘A hundred francs,’ said he, at last.

‘You shall have them.’

‘You will return alone?’

‘Yes, alone.’

‘You swear it?’

‘I swear it.’

‘Do not deceive me, madame,’ said he, in terrible accents; ‘you will see that I shall revenge myself upon you, and it would be sad, would it not, to see a poignard gleam from behind your muslin-embroidered curtains; or when you were walking in the forest, to feel a ball pierce your breast, without stopping in awe of your splendid jewels and satin dress?’

He let go her hand; and she ran rapidly towards the house.

The brigand followed her, and stopped at the border of the wood. He watched her till she disappeared in the darkness. Soon he perceived a speck of light, which glistened like a star, in the room. He knew that her desk was there. He followed all the movements of this light. After the lapse of a few instants the window became dark.

‘Now, perhaps,’ said he to himself, ‘she is crossing her park; she is opening the gate; she is taking the road for the forest.’

But the minutes passed, and she did not return. He waited, listening intently and trembling with impatience: the noise of the wings of a bird, the wind blowing the leaves about, seemed to him like the rustling of a dress; each tree took the form of a woman walking towards him. But time passed, and nobody appeared.

‘I am betrayed!’ cried he.

At this moment he thought he heard footsteps; but it was, perhaps, the wind mocking him. Then he uttered a cry of joy, for Madame Ervins was before him.

‘I keep my promise,’ said she to him. ‘I have a hundred francs, which I have counted out, in this purse; not a piece is missing; come, then, and pick it up.’

She let the purse fall. It gave forth a clear sound of money. The brigand started: this metallic ring caused his heart to leap with delight. This gold was to him like a drop of water to a thirsty traveller. He stepped quickly towards the purse.

‘If you advance, you are a dead man!’ cried a loud voice.

He stopped, stupefied, and remained motionless. Madame Ervins was there before him, holding two pistols on a level with his head, and ready to blow out his brains.

‘Would it not be very sad,’ said she to him, ‘to feel a ball tear through your breast?’

This was, indeed, a strange sight: on the one side the brigand, pale, his eyes staring, dazed with surprise; and on the other, the woman, calm and strong, sublime in her boldness, as she drew herself up to her full height.

‘Come on,’ cried she; ‘here is the gold at three steps from you: a feeble woman defends it, yet you do not throw yourself upon the woman and take the purse.’

He did not answer, but still looked at her.

‘I am astonished at you!’ she went on. ‘I have returned to prove to you that there is courage in our souls, that a pistol is not too heavy for our frail hands to bear, and that you may go back and tell your companions that you have found a brave woman.’

‘Pardon! pardon!’ cried the brigand, throwing himself upon his knees.

‘What! pardon? on your knees before me?’

‘Oh! I am a miserable wretch!’ said he, wildly; ‘but I am not an assassin. I have no weapons, I only wished to frighten you. I am a thief—a thief—this for the first time—I swear to you. But you know not how dreadful it is to have children say to you “I am hungry!”’

‘Oh!’ cried Madame Ervins, ‘this gold to him is bread, clothing, life!’ And she felt the tears start to her eyes, for she became a woman again, to pity the poor who said to her, ‘I suffer.’ Then she replied,—

‘Take the hundred francs; I give them to you.’

‘You give them to me! you give them to me!’ cried he, seizing the purse, which he grasped in his clenched fingers. ‘Oh, you are good, madame! I wish that my children could kneel before you. I do not envy you any more your elegant house. A hundred francs! a hundred francs! and I am not a thief!’ And, bounding on with joy, he rushed off to his cottage.

C. S. C.



A Brave Lady.



"Mottram generally had the hook caught in the tree."

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 91.)

CHAPTER XIII.



THE boys came in very late and in high spirits. If nurse had been at home, there would have been a skirmish about keeping tea waiting; but Jill and Mary Anne had got rather behindhand themselves, and so were only relieved to have got it ready before the hungry party came clattering in impatient to have their wants supplied.

She could see at once that Lance and Martin had made it up, but by what art Lance had managed it she could not guess, for they came in linked together arm in arm, whistling the first and second of 'Wait till the Clouds roll by,' while Jack and Davy brought up the rear, trying to disturb the harmony by loud and energetic singing of 'Jolly dogs.'

Jill felt a little misgiving as to whether this make-up between Martin and Lance might not lead to Martin's forgetting his promise of the night before; but she was too much taken up with her house-keeping anxieties to think much about it.

Mr. Flower had gone up to his room before the boys came in; 'and a good thing too!' Jill thought, when she heard the noise they made over tea.

They had had such a jolly day! Joe Mottram had joined them in the ravine. 'He picked up an inkling of what we were after when he was here yesterday, and my word, Jill, you should only have seen what a swell he came out, and what a jolly rod he had, with half-a-dozen different top-joints, and gaiters, and a book full of tackle, and a basket nearly as big as himself to carry home the fish in! We thought, first of all, we'd hide and give him the slip; but it's a good thing we didn't, for we went a long way further down the stream than we have ever been before, and the keepers came after us more than once; but, of course, they couldn't say a word when they saw young Mottram, though he has no more idea of fishing than he has of rabbit-shooting. It was downright waste his using that jolly rod, so Lance had it most of the day, and Joe had that old one of Davy's that has been spliced so often.'

'He generally had the hook caught in the tree overhead, and I believe he quite expected the fish to come and bite the float, for he never had any bait on his hook when I came across him, and Captain Nethercoat said—'

'Who's Captain Nethercoat?' asked Jill.

'He's an old brick,' said Jack.

'He's a friend of Lance's,' said Davy.

'He's an artist,' said Martin. 'You should see the pictures he has in his portfolio, Jill; jolly things, just like chromos.'

'He didn't seem to be getting on with the mill,' Davy said. 'I don't believe he touched it all the afternoon.'

'You young duffer!' said Jack. 'I suppose you

think those sort of things don't take any time. Why, I remember at the School of Art, some of the fellows went on daubing away for weeks, and every time I looked over it was less like the copy and more of a mess.'

'Where does he live?'

'Oh, he's staying at "The Bush" at present,' said Martin, with rather a conscious look. 'He wants to paint the old place at Hill Park, and he asked Joe Mottram about it this afternoon, and Joe said he did not think his father would have any objection.'

'I should think not!' said Jack; 'he ought to buy the picture when it's done, and give a jolly lot for it. I only wish we could have it!'

'Does father know him?' asked Jill.

'No; but he's just the sort of fellow he'd like,—quiet, you know, and awfully sensible,' said Jack, while Jill wondered if any one described as an old brick would be quite in father's style.

'We had half a mind to bring him back to tea with us,' said Martin; 'but we thought if father was ill it might bother him, though I think if we'd known that nurse was away we'd have brought him. She always makes such a fuss about things, and looks at strangers as if she'd like to eat them.'

Jill looked reflectively at the ham bone, and thought if Captain Nethercoat had come, there would not have been much to offer him.

'Have you known him long?' she asked Lance.

'No; he was stopping last winter at Milan, at the same hotel that we were. It was just at the time of that big jewel robbery that there was such a stir about. Captain Nethercoat was so much interested in it, that some people set it about that he was a detective. I was tremendously surprised to see him down here again. I hadn't a notion at Milan that he was anything of an artist.'

Just then father sent down word that if they had quite done tea, he should like Martin to come up to him. Jill knew very well what it was about, but Martin gave a little suspicious glance at her to see if she had been betraying his confidence, and before he went upstairs he followed her into the pantry.

'Jill,' he said, 'you haven't told father of our going to "The Bush"?''

'Of course I've not!' indignantly. 'You said *you* would.'

'Yes, I know I did, and I quite meant to, but Lance has been talking about it. Oh, you needn't be afraid that I shall ever go again! I've told him that I won't, and he doesn't mean to go either; but he says I can't tell of myself without telling of him, too, and that father would be sure to think it was all his fault—("Which it was," thought Jill)—which, of course, it wasn't, so I'm not going to say anything to father about it, only I thought I'd tell you what has made me change my mind, so that you might not think I had broken my word.'

And off went Martin upstairs, leaving Jill a little disappointed as she washed up the tea-things; and not quite sure that Lance's persuasions might not be stronger than Martin's resolutions about going to 'The Bush,' as they had been about telling father.

Martin was a long time upstairs with father, and when he came down he was in rather a subdued condition. It had been a great blow to him the news

that he was not to go back to school, and he did not at first take very kindly to the idea of acting tutor to Joe Mottram, for whom he had that exaggerated impatient contempt that a clever boy often has for a stupid one before time has tempered the cruel justice that youth metes out.

But when Mr. Flower had explained to him some of the difficulties and anxieties that had gathered so thickly round him of late, Martin forgot his own disappointment and disinclination, and entered warmly into his father's feelings, so that Mr. Flower regretted that he had so long treated him as a boy, and had so lost the sympathy that might have been such a comfort to him before.

Lance and Jack and Davy were sitting outside in the garden, wondering what the long confabulation upstairs could be about; and Jill, who could have told them, kept her own counsel and laughed to hear the guesses which were so far from the truth.

Indeed, when Martin came down and told them he was going to be coach to young Mottram, they, one and all, refused to believe it, and thought he was chaffing, and when at last he convinced them that it was a fact, he was much annoyed at the immense amusement they got out of the notion, and the absurd pictures they drew of him sitting up in state with grammar and lexicon, and Joe Mottram opposite to him stammering and writhing in the agonies of repetition and parsing.

'Oh, Martin, I say! you'll let us have a go sometimes, won't you? just for a lark.'

'I suppose old Mottram won't let you have a ruler to wake him up with now and then?'

'I'd bet anything he'd rather have had Lance or me if his governor had given him the choice. He'd never have chosen you; you've always been so jolly crusty to him; he looks as if he thought you were just going to pitch into him every time you open your mouth.'

Martin did not pay much attention to their chaffing; he had a good deal to think about in the new turn that his life was taking, and the glimpse behind the scenes that his father had given him. Lance, too, was quieter than usual, and when they went up to bed Jill heard him call Martin into his room, and all the time she was undressing she could hear their voices going on talking very eagerly. If it had not been for a little reassuring whisper from Martin as he said good-night, she might have been afraid that he was being overpersuaded, but as it was she got into bed with a quiet mind and was soon fast asleep.

But to-night again she was awake, but this time it was by a knock at the door and Martin's voice asking if he might come in. Again, as last night, the moonlight was shining into her room, and Martin's profile, as he sat in the window-seat, showed sharp and clear against the white light, like the silhouettes in father's room.

'I say, Jill,' he began, 'have you any money?'

Now, nurse, before she left, had handed over to Jill the very small sum she was given weekly to expend on housekeeping, with strict injunctions how every penny was to be laid out; and beside this, Jill had half-a-crown which Mr. Mottram had given her, and for the spending of which she had a hundred and

one plans, and a few pence, acquired at various times, and hoarded with a view to Jack's birthday in October; so, altogether, Jill felt that she was possessed of considerable wealth.

'It's not for me,' he went on, 'it's for Lance. You see, Jill, I've been talking to him ever so long, and he says he hadn't a notion that father wouldn't like our going to have a game of billiards in the evening at "The Bush," though I don't know why he thought we went sneaking out at the back-door if there was no objection to it, and he doesn't a bit want to go again, only he's been so awfully unlucky the last few evenings, and he owes some of the fellows there a little, and he doesn't like to cut the whole business till he has paid them.'

Jill was sitting up in bed with the sheet drawn up to her chin, and her face looked very white and horrified in the moonlight, with wide-open dark eyes and her hair standing out in a curly mane all round.

'Oh, I dare say it sounds awfully wicked!' said Martin, a little impatiently; 'but that's only because we live shut up here, and don't know what most people do. It's a game called pool that we play at "The Bush," and every one has to put so much into the pool, and then there's so much on each life; but it's no use trying to explain the game, you wouldn't understand it. Lance played a lot better than any one at first and always won, but when Captain Nethercoat came, he plays better, and Lance has been careless or unlucky, or something, and has kept on losing, and last night he says they went on betting on the game and he got let in rather deep. That's what he wanted to see father about this morning, because, of course, these are debts of honour, and a fellow's bound to pay them whatever happens. Yes, of course, he ought not to have done it; but he's been telling me a lot about his life to-night, and I'm sure it's no wonder if he has got into queer ways, for he and Uncle Will have hardly ever had any settled home, but have lived about in hotels abroad, constantly in debt, and mixing with no end of black-legs and rough company. Poor fellow! he was awfully down in the mouth to-night, and said he'd have been very different if he had had a home like ours; and, of course, he didn't say anything against Uncle Will, but I fancy he's a very different sort to father. And I thought,' went on Martin, 'that if we could manage to help him pay off what he owes, he might get out of the way of it, anyhow, while he's here. If only we could do it without bothering father; for Lance says he's quite sure the governor distrusts him, and if he hears of this, it will make him think all the worse of him.'

It was so seldom that Martin confided in Jill or asked her help in any matter, that she was much impressed by the importance of the occasion, and anxious to fall in with his ideas and proud to be treated as an ally; so she did not make any of the objections she would have done even to Jack, but produced nurse's old washleather purse and her own small hoard, and counted the money out into Martin's hand in the moonlight.

'He won't want it *all*, will he?' she asked, rather tremulously; 'and oh, Martin! what shall I do about the milkman to-morrow? and there are still three days before the end of the week, and there's hardly any of



The Return Home.

the ham left, and I do want father to have some beef-tea to-morrow.'

Martin turned the coins over thoughtfully in his hand. Lance had not told him the exact amount of his debt, but Martin felt very doubtful if this would be enough to cover it.

'Never mind,' he said cheerfully, 'we'll go on short commons for three days and manage somehow. It's a blessing nurse is away, or we couldn't have done it.'

Jill did not feel very comfortable as she sat on the bed fingering the soft, empty purse, while Martin carried off the contents to Lance's room; dark memories of the milkman and the baker rose up before her mind's eye, and of strict injunctions from nurse about a shilling to be paid at the oil shop and half-a-crown somewhere else, and then there was the washing! She had one foot out of bed ready to go

after Martin and say that Lance could not possibly have all the money, when Martin came back.

'Oh! Jill,' he said, 'I wish you could have seen how grateful Lance was; he asked me to thank you ever so much for helping him. He's going to-morrow morning to pay off what he owes and then we mean to try and have jolly evenings at home and think no more of "The Bush." Oh, never bother your mind about the baker and all the rest of it! We'll manage somehow, never fear—'

But just at that moment a sound caught both Martin's and Jill's ears, and they listened for a moment in silence; and then came another noise, unmistakably the sound of the closing of the back-door; and Martin with a muttered exclamation rushed to the window just in time to see Lance running post-haste across the lawn to the gate.

(To be continued.)



Sagacity of Rats.

THE RETURN HOME.

WHEN Mary's kind parents had left her at school,

And sailed o'er the sea far away,
The poor little girl could not bear the strict rule,
But wept bitter tears every day.

But after a time 'twas her greatest delight
Her duties and tasks to fulfil,
And Mary was busy from morning to night,
And every day happier still.

Each mail brought her letters from those she held dear,

They spoke of a home far away;
They said, 'Dearest Mary, we long for you here,
We talk of you each passing day.

You'll come to us, darling, when school-time is past,
You'll sail o'er the ocean so wide:
Don't fret, my dear Mary, time slips away fast,
And soon you'll be here by our side.'

One evening she sat 'neath a spreading beech-tree,
And learned her French lessons with care;
When, suddenly starting, now whom did she see?
Her father and mother stood there!

'We've come for you, Mary, we could not delay,
Your home is now over the sea.
With father and mother you'll soon sail away,
Our joy and our treasure to be.'

D. B.

SAGACITY OF RATS.



IHAVE seen a good deal of the habits of rats, and have heard tales of the able-bodied ones carrying their aged and infirm friends to the horse-pond to drink, and back to the barn again, and the like. I have read of the way in which they carry away unbroken eggs—namely, by one grasping the egg, lying on his back, and being drawn away by an accomplice

by his tail. But nothing I have either heard or read ever surprised me so much as what I saw the other day. Passing a piggery at nightfall, I saw a rat sitting on the top of a post of one of the sty divisions. Presently I heard a squeaking, which, upon closer observation, I found came from a second rat, which was vainly trying to get to the top of the post also. Presently, after much fidgeting about on the part of the rat on the top, he leant himself over, and—whether with his teeth or his fore paws I could not make out—fixing upon his struggling neighbour, he drew him up, and they both disappeared on the other side.

HE RAN AWAY TO SEA.

WALTER WINTLE was very fond of reading. The librarian and his small assistant at the Free Library in their town knew Walter's face as well as they did that of the Mayor. He was rarely away with one book for longer than three days;

indeed, he had often returned to have his book changed before the second day was gone.

'I think I have done him this time,' said the stout old librarian to himself one day, as, in answer to Walter's request, he handed him a thick, closely-printed book, with enough reading in it to last any ordinary boy for a week.

But on the third day Walter returned triumphant, and demanded another volume.

'You should read the books, young man, before you bring them back,' said the disappointed librarian, severely.

'So I have,' said Walter; 'you ask me questions out of it, and see if I don't answer them.'

But the librarian declined the contest, muttering, as he pushed the volume into its place, that he had no time to ask boys questions.

Walter, nothing daunted, went off with another book, and his frequent visits were never complained of again.

Now, his father and mother had no taste for reading. The former had been heard to say that no man, with the cares of a small but brisk little grocery business on his mind, could do more than look at the weekly newspaper. His mother, too, declared that, what with the twins, and the necessity for giving help in the shop, it was not likely that she could have any time to waste in that direction either.

One result of this was, that Walter's parents gave no thought to the reading habits of their son, or the kind of literature he found most pleasure in. It was enough for them that, however intent he might be upon his book, he was always ready to put it down at a moment's notice in order to help in the shop or elsewhere.

This was well enough so far, for Walter was a willing lad. But, at the same time, it would have been well to look into his favourite books.

'Adventures, that's what I want—adventures,' said Walter to himself when he first obtained the library catalogue. He began, unhappily for himself, with sea-stories. *Tom Cringle's Log*, *The Cruise of the Midge*, and many less famous works were one by one carried home and digested. Then in order came the stories of a certain Captain; and afterwards some less widely-read tales of adventure.

When the more exciting books had been, one after another, read and returned, he tried something milder, but soon he missed the horrors and the gallant deeds which so freely sprinkled the pages of his earlier choices. As a last resort he fell back upon the columns of some cheap penny papers, the illustrations of which promised mighty deeds, wondrous escapes, and blood-curdling horrors in plenty.

This promise their contents quite fulfilled, and their sea-stories in particular made a great show of adventures and glory. In short, they finished the work which *Tom Cringle's Log* began, and Walter resolved to be a sailor.

Now his father, seeing the readiness with which Walter helped in the shop when needed, had quite made up his mind that his son would go into the business. He was therefore taken by surprise when Walter suddenly said at supper one night, 'Father, I want to be a sailor.'

'Bless the boy!' said his mother, dropping her glass in alarm, 'whatever has put that into your head?'

Walter replied that he didn't know.

'Wallie,' said his father, with great gravity, 'I don't want to boast, but here's a tidy little business turning over a matter of—well, I won't say how much a-week. Now, what you've got to do is to help me with that, and in due time' (here the good man sank his voice to a whisper) 'in due time I'll make you a partner.'

Wallie was understood to say that he didn't want to be a partner; he would rather be a cabin-boy.

'A cabin-boy!' said his mother; 'you, as have always slept in a good bed with plenty of blankets!'

At this moment, in order to increase the family discord, the twins woke in their cradle, and, with one accord, set up a dreadful howl.

Walter saw that the moment was a bad one to air his scheme, and therefore said no more.

The next week found him regularly serving in the shop, and his school-days over. He was so quick and ready that his father saw at once his value, and encouraged him accordingly.

Things went on quietly for a couple of months, and then Walter's favourite paper came out with a new story entitled, 'From Cabin-boy to Captain.' The adventures were really thrilling, and the rapid progress of the hero made the picture a very captivating one.

Chapter VI. quite finished Walter, and once more he broached the subject to his father.

'Look here, my boy,' said that good man, laying down his evening pipe, in the enjoyment of which he had been interrupted by Walter's request, 'you'll never make a sailor: you're meant to turn an honest penny at the grocery trade. You stick to it, and don't let me hear any more of this.'

His mother, on being appealed to, besought him to stay at home, 'and be a good boy.'

That decided Walter. He would do as Jack the cabin-boy did, and run away to sea.

Late that night, when all but himself were a-bed and asleep, he crept out of the house, wearing his every-day clothes, and with the sum of six shillings and sixpence in his pocket. At the end of a small stick he carried a bundle, as had been usual with all the runaways he had ever read of.

The nearest seaport of any size was Bristol, and towards this he bent his steps as best he could in the darkness. Unhappily, it began to rain before he had gone more than three miles, and the young adventurer found himself in danger of getting wet through.

This, he felt, would be a mistake, and he therefore looked around as best he could for shelter. Some buildings were soon descried, and, in hopes of getting cover in a shed, he climbed over a low wall.

Hardly had he done so, before a savage growl and the rattle of a chain compelled him to return with more speed than dignity. To be bitten by a dog would be another mistake. He trudged on again in the wet, but found walking in the rain more tiring than he had hitherto supposed.

Presently he heard a steady tramp, tramp behind him. Who could it be? Nobody in pursuit as yet.

But who else? 'Possibly some poacher or other scoundrel, who might deem it worth their while to rob a lad, or even murder him! This was, indeed, an adventure, and more than he wished for!

The steps came rapidly nearer, and Walter slunk far into the shade of a tree, wishing the now rising moon had been covered with clouds. But he hid in vain.

'Halloa, young man!' said a gruff voice; and a hand was at once laid on Walter's collar.

'Please, sir,' he began, seeing that his captor was a policeman. And then the whole story of his daring deed had to come out.

'Now, young man,' said the officer, 'you put your best foot foremost and come back with me.'

'Never!' said Walter, remembering what the famous cabin-boy had once said when his capture was attempted.

However, his captor brought out a pair of handcuffs, and was about to slip them on Walter's wrists, when, alarmed at the prospect, he cried, 'All right, I'll go.'

'Very good,' said the officer; 'then step out.'

They stepped out accordingly, and were soon near the grocer's shop again, when Walter broke the long silence.

'If you please,' he said very humbly, and not at all like a hero, 'if you would let me slip into the house without waking up the rest, I could easily do it, and they wouldn't know I had gone away at all.'

It was as yet only four o'clock in the morning, and nobody was astir.

'You will?' said the constable.

'I will,' said Walter.

'Then in you go.'

In he went, crept up to bed, and piled everything he could on his little bed in order to keep himself warm. His wet clothes he hung up as much as possible, and was soon fast asleep.

At breakfast next morning Mr. Wintle, who had heard the story from the policeman, asked his son, 'What do you think of last night, my boy? How should you have liked being out all night in this pouring rain keeping watch?'

'Not a bit,' said Walter; and, indeed, he lost all wish for a mariner's life from that day. Instead of rising, as the story promised, to a captain's post, he became a well-to-do and much respected grocer.

A. R. B.

THE GIPSY BOY.



LITTLE gipsy boy am I,
Contented with my lot,
I never grudge, or grieve, or sigh
To be what I am not.

I never was within a town,
Nor do I wish to be;
I'd rather ramble up and down
The forest fresh and free.

I'd rather hear the tuneful lark,
Who soars on buoyant wing,
And flies beyond the vapours dark
Ere she begins to sing,



The Gipsy Boy.

Than wander through the gaping crowd
 Upon the dusty street,
 And hear the laughter rude and loud
 Of all the folk I meet.

But, gipsy though I am, my hands
 Can weave the pliant straw,
 And prettier baskets I can make
 Than town-boys ever saw.

I gather nuts, and berries too,
 From off the woodland-tree,
 And could you see me then, I know
 That you would envy me.

D. B.



Jill meeting Lance on the Stairs.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 100.)

CHAPTER XIV.



LEASE, Miss Jill, the milkman have ask for his money.'

'Miss Jill dear, Mrs. Jones have call round for the money for last week's washing as nurse promised to be ready for her to-day.'

'There's not enough bread for breakfast, Miss Jill, and I'll just run round for a loaf if you've a sixpence you can let me have.'

It was no wonder that Jill went into father's room with such a careworn little face that he noticed it, and asked if the anxieties of housekeeping were so very severe, and when nurse was coming back; and she was obliged to beat a hasty retreat to hide the tears that would rush into her eyes, and to keep her trembling lips from telling all the trouble.

Martin had stormed and raged and abused himself for his folly in being taken in by Lance, but what good did that do? It would not alter the fact that Lance had carried off that very necessary little sum, and had come back with empty pockets, and without having paid his debts.

'I didn't mean to go,' he said; 'but after you'd gone and I had the money in my hand, it came over me all of a sudden that my luck might change, and that it would be so jolly to bring back Jill's money and pay off old Nethercoat without any one's help. But it's like my luck!'

Further than this Martin could not get much out of him, nor did he offer any other defence or excuse for his conduct, but threw himself on his bed, saying that he was a wretched unlucky fellow, and that Martin had better give him up, and think as badly of him as every one else did.

It was impossible now to keep Jack and Davy in the dark, as Jack had woke up last night when Lance came in, and overheard some of the row; and when the bread ran short at breakfast, and Davy began chaffing about Jill's housekeeping, Martin boxed his ears, and Jill fairly burst out crying. So after that they were obliged to hear all about it, and it was a great relief to Martin to be able to abuse Lance to some one who would chorus heartily, instead of only to Jill, who tried to make excuses for him and looked miserable.

Lance did not make his appearance at breakfast, and the unanimous verdict of the boys was that he did not deserve to have any; but Jill's tender heart could not endure the idea of such a failure of hospitality even to the greatest culprit, and when the boys were out of the way she slipped upstairs with a tray with a cup of tea and a bit of toast, managed somehow out of Jill's own slender portion.

She received no answer to her knock, and opening the door could see nothing of Lance but a dark, close-cropped head buried in the pillow—asleep, she fancied.

'Lance!'

No answer.

'Lance, here is your breakfast.'

'I don't want any.'

'I'll put it on the chair by the side.'

A very ungracious sounding murmur was all the answer; and Jill came away unconscious that, from under the bed-clothes, two dark eyes were watching her with more real compunction than all Martin's reproaches had produced.

It had always been Mr. Flower's rule since he came to Shettle to pay ready money for everything, and if the money was not forthcoming the thing required must be done without; so that empty purse, which Jill examined over and over again as if it might have a magic power of filling itself, meant that there must be nothing taken from the butcher, baker, or grocer, for three days; and the bare idea of such a famine made all the boys more than usually hungry, and brought back to Jill tantalising memories of the luxurious plenty at Hill Park.

There was also Mary Anne to be thought of, who had a good healthy appetite, and who considered herself entitled to 'plenty of victuals' to make up for her wages being low; and the worst of all to Jill was that father would have to go without the beef-tea which she had set her heart on for him.

Davy heroically volunteered to sacrifice a Bramah poulet to which he was particularly attached, and Jill's tender-heartedness over the rabbits was quite forgotten in the exigencies of the moment, and she agreed in the most cold-blooded way to the slaughter of two of them, whose twinkling noses and engaging qualities had endeared them to all who knew them.

They all grew quite cheerful when these resources had been thought of, and the boys were inclined to think that after all it was rather fun, and a little like being on a desert island or in a besieged city, and they thought that with vegetables out of the garden they could very well be independent of the tradespeople; and Davy made them all laugh by proposing that they should have tea-cakes, like the princess who, being told that the poor people were starving for bread, wondered why they did not have penny buns.

Martin was to go up to Hill Park that morning to see Mr. Mottram, and settle what day he should begin operations with Joe, and what hours in the day would be most convenient; so he had something else to think of besides the domestic crisis, for he had to swallow a lot of shyness, and try and assume a more dignified, responsible manner, than he had ever done before.

'Perhaps they'll ask you to lunch,' said Jack; 'you must tuck in well if you do.'

'I shan't stop,' said Martin, hastily; and then, with a little quick look at Jill, 'Yes, perhaps I may, so don't wait dinner for me;' inwardly resolving that he would not be in till dinner-time was well over.

It was a great relief to Jill when Jack and Davy volunteered to go with Martin as far as the Lodge, for on such an occasion as this the short cut by the ha-ha was not to be thought of. Jill did not know how they would behave to Lance when he came down, and also they were so likely to come out with

some unlucky remark before father, and make him suspicious of something being wrong; and besides this, foolish little Jill wanted a moment to herself to visit Black Bess and Spot, who were hanging up by their poor back-legs in the larder, and to bestow a tearful little kiss on their poor cold noses that would twinkle, and to whisper in the soft dead ears that she was so sorry, and would never forget them.

Tears were very near Jill's eyes all that morning, and when Lance came down about eleven it was a very woe-begone little face that looked up at him. The washerwoman had been again with a sad story of a sick child and immediate need of even the small sum owing from the Flowers; and Jill, who knew by short but bitter experience the difference which a small sum of money in hand might make, felt wrung to the heart by having to put her off till Monday.

Lance came downstairs with his head up and whistling, expecting to receive a volley from the boys, and carry it off with a high hand. But Jill's tearful eyes brought his head down and stopped his whistling in a second, and he came over to the window-seat where she sat crouched up with the greasy washing-book open on her knees, and he stood looking down at her with such speechless remorse as brought out Jill's tears in a burst, and her sobs in a storm.

'Don't! don't!' he said; 'don't cry, Jill! What is the matter?'

And then she sobbed out her troubles, all confused and jumbled together, washing and bread, and Black Bess and father's beef-tea, till he said, after listening in perplexity for a few minutes, 'It's all my fault, isn't it? I can't tell you how sorry I am. I don't think I ever felt so sorry before. Oh, Jill! I dare say you won't believe me, and will think I'm humbugging, as Jack says, but I think I might have been different if I'd had a home and a little sister like Martin's.'

And then he got up suddenly and went out, and Jill saw him cross the garden quickly and go out at the gate, and she sat there wondering and mopping her eyes to try to make them fit to go into father's room.

'Daddy!' she said in the very middle of a leading article, though what there was in Mr. Gladstone to suggest such an idea was not very apparent, 'did Lance's mother die long ago like ours?'

'Lance's mother?' Mr. Flower echoed. 'Who told you anything about her?'

'No one, only he said his home was not like ours.'

'No, Gilly Flower; nor, poor boy! was his mother like yours. Lance's father and mother are separated.'

'Oh!' said Jill, to whose young mind the only possible separation of husband and wife was death; and Mr. Flower knew that she did not understand.

'There is a worse separation than death, little Jill, that parts husbands and wives sometimes. We must be very patient and gentle with Lance, Jill, for he has lost his mother, dear, in a way that (thank God!) you never did.'

He said no more, and Jill sat pondering the new strange thought of a separation, and a loss that was not death.

Just before dinner-time, as Jill came downstairs to see that Mary Anne had laid the cloth, she met

Lance on the stairs carrying something covered with a cloth. His face was bright and smiling as he pulled the cloth away and displayed before Jill's eyes a large crusty loaf, and in the dint at the top there was a sovereign.

(To be continued.)



BY AUCTION.

SALES by auction, so far from being an invention of to-day, were at least known so far back as the time of the Romans. It is supposed by some that they chiefly used the plan to dispose of the spoils taken in war. As these sales were said to take place 'under the spear,' it is fair to conclude that they stuck a long spear into the ground to mark the stand at which the sale would be held. It was long the custom in England to mark the time during which bids might be offered by burning an inch of candle, the last offer before the light went out being, of course, the successful one. This custom led many to make no bid until the candle was nearly out, and many often delayed so long that the end of the flame still found them silent. A certain buyer, often seen at such sales, was remarkable for the skill with which he always put in his bid, exactly as the candle went out. When pressed for the secret of his success, he said that he had always noticed the smoke to descend just as the flame was about to die away. At other times the space open for bidding has been decided by the running of a sand-glass; whilst now it is left to the judgment of the auctioneer, who fixes the limit by a blow of his hammer when there appears no hope of any further advance.

In what is called a Dutch auction the method of sale is exactly reversed, the goods being offered at a certain price, and then lowered until they reach one at which a purchaser is found. This, however, is not rightly termed an auction if we keep to the proper meaning of the word, which every schoolboy knows comes from the Latin word to increase. A. R. B.

LOST IN THE SNOW.

ALAS! and must I perish here?
Deep in the snow-drift must I lie,
No friend, no fellow creature near
To hear me breathe my latest sigh?

Alas! my mother . . . she will wait
And linger by the cottage pane,
My little sisters at the gate:
But all their watching will be vain.

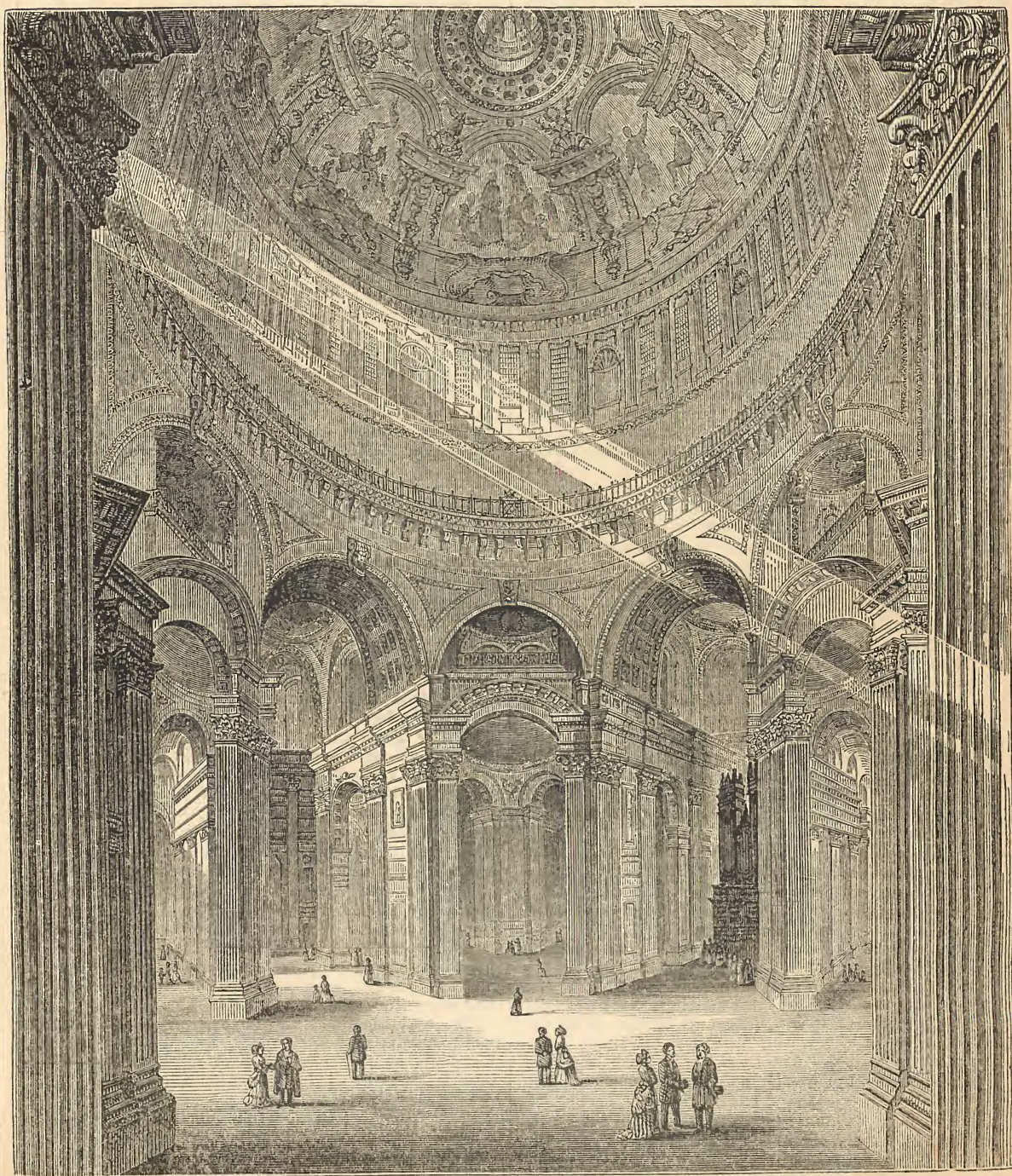
Those friends, they were so loved and dear,
How dear I never knew before;
Yet, far from home, I perish here—
Oh, never shall I see them more!

But God in Heaven can hear my cry,
The God whose heart is full of love;
And if He wills that I should die,
He'll take me to His home above.

D. B.



Lost in the Snow.



St. Paul's — under the Dome.



ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

EVERYBODY knows it by sight, even those who have never visited London; its dome and cupola, rising above the countless roofs of dwelling-houses, is familiar to us in every nursery picture-book, not to speak of more grown-up newspapers and illustrations.

But not many know anything of the trials and troubles this grand old building has gone through, the storms it has weathered. Let me, then, try and jot down a few

facts about St. Paul's Cathedral.

First of all, as to its foundation. Some say—but this is almost too pleasant a thought to be true—that the great Apostle St. Paul, in his wanderings, tarried in the little London of that day, and was the founder of the church, which therefore bore his name. But having no proof of this we will pass it by, and only assert that, little more than one hundred years after the death of our Lord, this Cathedral, in some simpler form, existed; though of those early days, also, we have but scant notice.

Pass, then, to the reign of William the Conqueror, when it not only existed but was burned to the ground—possibly giving rise to the ringing of that curfew bell which was to be a safeguard against future conflagrations: it was not rebuilt, however, till the close of the eleventh century.

In A.D. 1444 the spire was struck by lightning; in 1561 the roof, steeple, and aisle were destroyed, either by lightning or the carelessness of plumbers. Some repairs were effected; but the first fervour of early Christianity had now worn off, and the building was allowed to fall into ruins.

Fancy a dung-heap within the doors of St. Paul's Cathedral; beggars and drunkards sleeping on the choir-steps, and the middle aisle a thoroughfare, known as Paul's Walk, where people met and talked over the news—making, as of old, the House of God a place for the money-changers!

The work of restoration by Inigo Jones was hardly finished when civil war broke out, and Oliver Cromwell quartered his horse-soldiers in the nave, otherwise damaging the structure. The traces of these reckless intruders again had just been effaced when fire once more seized upon the edifice, and left its smouldering fragments for the contemplation of the great architect, Sir Christopher Wren.

Thirty-five years was this temple in building under his directions; it is second only in size of all the churches of the world, St. Peter's at Rome being alone more vast. And there it still stands, the magnificent pile, the wonder and admiration of all who visit it!

Gossips and money-makers no longer throng its aisles and desecrate its sacred places; but, instead, the sound of daily prayer and praise wakes its echoes.

Much-honoured dust lies here; but one name alone shall be mentioned, that of the brave soldier, Sir Philip Sydney. His remains were interred here in 1586, with the utmost magnificence, the whole nation

mourning for him for many months after. Sir Philip Sydney was at once the most heroic and virtuous character of his time—worthy, in very deed, of a quiet resting-place in our noblest of churches. H. A. F.

RIDING AND DRIVING IN OLDEN TIMES.

WHEN roads were few and bad, progress from place to place, either on business or pleasure, was not so easy as it is now-a-days.

In the time of Henry VIII., ladies usually rode behind their lords on pillions. If the weather was bad they could only wrap up well, or stay at home. Coaches were introduced into England by an Earl of Arundel, in 1580. The Duke of Buckingham was not content with the usual pair of horses, but he harnessed six to his carriage. The first coach used in France had leather doors, and curtains instead of glass windows. In 1658 there were only some three hundred coaches in all Paris. A hundred years afterwards there were fourteen thousand. Sedan-chairs were largely used, after their introduction by the Duke of Buckingham. R. B.

CLIMBING-BOYS.

SOME occupations involve work so repulsive to ordinary feelings, that we cannot imagine why any man should have made choice of such at the outset of life. Among those which must be specially disagreeable is the work of chimney-sweeping. But, unpleasant as it must be under all circumstances, this occupation is now free from the frightful hardships with which it was connected in the days of our grandfathers, when chimneys were swept by little boys, who endured a life of such degradation and misery, that those who witnessed their sufferings must often have felt almost glad when they were ended by an early death. The poor little climbing-boy was an outcast among the poorest of the people. Other and more fortunate lads would mock him, scout his company, or pelt him with mud or with snow-balls, according to the season; while even such boys as might possess some kindness of feeling were by no means anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of one whose appearance was so grimy and gloomy.

The master-sweep had some difficulty in obtaining apprentices to such a trade; therefore it was not uncommon to allow poor workhouse children to be handed over to his tender mercies: cases, too, were known, where brutal parents actually sold their helpless children for small sums to this life of misery; and what life could be more miserable?

The boy, sometimes as young as seven years old, had to climb a dark and crooked flue, sometimes fifty feet high, on the simple plan of squeezing himself into the aperture, and working his way upwards by pressing his shoulders, elbows, and knees against the walls. To protect the boy from absolute suffocation a cap was drawn over his face, and with a scraper in one hand, and a brush in the other, he was compelled to enter the chimney. If the miserable child shrank back from the task before him, he was goaded onwards by blows and curses. If, having ascended part of the way, he became exhausted, or stuck fast

in the crooked flue, another boy would be sent up to urge him onwards with a pin, or even a wisp of lighted straw was applied to his naked feet.

Fearful accidents were not uncommon, but they are too horrible to be related here. When, at length surmounting every difficulty of the ascent, the poor little fellow, with bleeding elbows and knees, emerged at the top, another danger still awaited him. In his eagerness to breathe the fresh air, he might accidentally break the chimney-pot; and cases are on record where it has been known to fall crash into the street with the sweeper inside, like a little bird in its shell.

Besides the unavoidable dangers and difficulties of their wretched calling, the climbing-boys had other miseries to endure from the hands of masters who were notoriously of a low and brutal class. Kept without change of clothing, sleeping in cellars and outhouses, starved, and beaten, and turned out in the morning to face all weathers, it is not to be wondered at that disease made fearful havoc among them. When, at last, they grew too old to be useful at the work, many of them were so crippled and deformed that they could get no employment as journeymen-sweepers. What, then, was the fate of these unfortunates? Totally uneducated as they were, and shunned by all other workmen, they had often no other resource but to take up with thieves; and in those hard days, which many persons are so ready to call 'the good old times,' it was a well-known fact that many of the poor lads who had begun life as climbing-boys only too often ended their miserable career upon the gallows. But already the faint streaks of dawn were showing themselves upon the horizon.

In 1773 a society was formed with the view of ameliorating the sad condition of climbing-boys, of whom there were 500 in London alone, bound in hopeless slavery. The most active spirit among them was a Mr. Jonas Hanway, a most philanthropic man, who earnestly strove to interest the Lord Mayor and magistrates on their behalf. But no one seemed to think it possible that chimneys could be swept in any other than by the old method; so that nothing came of this movement for many years: indeed, it was not till the beginning of this century that a fresh start was made on their behalf.

The first measure adopted was a highly practical one: a prize was offered for the best machine by which chimneys might be swept without the necessity of employing boys. Several inventions were brought forward, the most successful of which was one on the principle now in general use. But simple and effective as the new machine was proved to be, the great mass of the population took little interest in the matter.

The ordinary British householder clung to the climbing-boy as a necessary evil, and looked upon his sufferings too much as a matter of course. But the subject was never again allowed to rest: the Society of Friends took it up, then the poet Montgomery lent it his powerful assistance. At last, in 1832, not long before the abolition of slavery in our colonies, our little sooty slaves at home were set free. Fifty years of agitation on the subject had been necessary before this terrible blot on the humanity of our country was for ever removed.

D. B. McKean.



THE CABBIES' KITTEN.

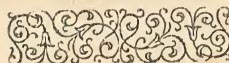
ON my way to church in Edinburgh one Sunday, I had to pass a large courtyard which forms the entrance to a row of stables, the property of a cab-hirer. Several men were lounging about the gate, smoking and chatting; they seemed to be stablemen — rather rough-looking fellows. Just as I came up they all looked into the yard, and one of them shouted something which sounded like, 'Come on.' I paused a minute before passing the entrance, expecting a carriage to drive out; but when nothing came, and I heard no wheels, I looked into the yard. There I saw, advancing with perfect confidence and great deliberation, the smallest, dirtiest, shabbiest little kitten that I ever saw in my life. It was gray and white, with a stiff little tail scarcely thicker than a knitting-needle, rough hair, decidedly bandy legs, and a very red nose. And yet this queer little morsel was evidently an object of deep interest to those men, one of whom crouched down on the ground to welcome it, while all of them spoke to it in carefully modulated tones, as though its small size demanded tender treatment. 'Dinna fash the cat!' cried one man angrily, as another tried to hasten the kitten's deliberate movements with a very gentle push behind; but puss was not going to be hurried, and went on her own quiet way until she reached the very middle of the gate and the centre of the group, when she tucked in her ridiculous little tail, and suddenly sat down, with her red nose in the air, and an inquisitive look in her bright eyes.

So I left her, surrounded by her uncouth-looking friends, turning a deaf ear to all their blandishing speeches, with a perfect confidence in their kindness, which it did me good to see.

BOYS MAKE MEN.

WHEN you see a ragged urchin
Standing wistful in the street,
With torn hat and kneeless trowsers,
Dirty face and bare red feet,
Pass not by that child unheeding;
Smile upon him. Mark me, when
He's grown old he'll not forget it;
For, remember, boys make men.

Let us try to add some pleasure
To the life of every boy:
For each child needs tender interest
In its sorrows and its joy.
Call your boys home by its brightness;
They avoid the household when
It is cheerless with unkindness,
For, remember, boys make men.





The Ragged Boy.



Captain Nethercoat startled by Jill's sudden appearance.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 107.)

CHAPTER XV.



MRS. MOTTRAM came that afternoon and fetched Jill out for a drive. She would listen to no excuses, for she said that the child was looking pale and heavy-eyed; as, indeed, she was, and no wonder after her disturbed night and anxious, tearful day.

Martin had not come in to dinner, but if he had meant Jill to imagine that he was lunching at Hill Park he was disappointed,

for Mrs. Mottram told her that they could not persuade him to stop.

'It's a pity he's so shy,' Mrs. Mottram said. 'I've no doubt, as Mr. Mottram says, he's a very clever young fellow, but if he was only a little bit more like his cousin Lance it would be so much easier to get on with him, and make it pleasanter all round. There! I didn't mean to vex you, my dear; it's only right and natural that you should prefer your brother.'

A drive with Mrs. Mottram was a very peaceful and rather drowsy affair, and as the horses jogged along between the hedges and through the villages, and Mrs. Mottram nodded off now and then into placid slumber, Jill had plenty of time to think and to wonder where Lance had got the sovereign that had relieved her anxieties and paid the washing. She could not help crying when he gave it to her, it was such a relief; and Lance was so kind, and had sat down by the side of her on the stairs with the loaf on his knees, and put his arm round her, and dried her eyes with his own pocket-handkerchief—such a nice fine one, too, with eau-de-cologne on it—not like Jack's, which were given, like his waistcoats, to spots and holes and curious odours.

Jack and Davy were late for dinner, they too, like Martin, having had noble intentions of going without; but the pangs of hunger had been too much for their resolution, and they turned up at two in such a famishing condition that they could have eaten Lance himself with pleasure, but were not sorry to find that there was no necessity, and they polished off Black Bess without any false feelings of sentiment on the subject.

Jill whispered to them as they came in that Lance had made the money all right, and that he was so sorry about it all, and that they must not think any more of it; but Jack only said, 'Gammon!' and made himself so disagreeable to Lance through dinner, that Jill was quite glad when it was over, and Lance went off for a walk by himself.

'Oh, yes!' said Jack, when Jill reproached him for his behaviour; 'he knows how to come round you and Martin; but to my mind "once bit, twice shy," and I think Master Lance is a slippery character, and I wish he'd take himself off. I wonder where he got the money from?'

Mrs. Mottram insisted on Jill coming back to Hill Park to tea, and on their way there, as they were

just turning into the park, they came upon Lance standing talking to a gentleman whom Jill did not know, but readily guessed to be Captain Nethercoat. He was a short, slight man, with grey hair and moustache, and bright dark eyes deeply set under grey eyebrows.

Mrs. Mottram stopped the carriage to speak to Lance, and Jill felt quite vexed, for Martin's sake, at his pleasant, easy manners, and at his ready acceptance of Mrs. Mottram's invitation to get into the carriage and come and have some tea, and escort Jill home afterwards, especially as a minute afterwards she caught sight of Martin himself, coming slouching along, dusty and shabby and cross-looking, as dinnerless folk are apt to be, and she noticed that, as soon as he caught sight of Mrs. Mottram's carriage, he hastily crossed a stile to be out of the way.

'Yes, that is Captain Nethercoat,' Lance told them, 'and he wants to sketch the house if you have no objection.'

'Yes, Joe was saying something about it yesterday, but I thought he was one of those travelling photographers who are always bothering to take the house, and show one a very indistinct plate, and expect one to order and pay for copies that one never gets.'

'Oh, no!' said Lance; 'Captain Nethercoat only sketches for pleasure, and he says he has heard so much about Hill Park, and what a fine old place it is.'

'Oh, I'm sure I've no objection!' said Mrs. Mottram, 'and I should be very happy to see him any day if he likes to call; only me and Mr. Mottram are going away for a few days next week. We're not going to take Joe with us, and he and Martin are going to begin their work on Monday, two hours regular every morning. I thought it was a pity to begin before the holidays were over; but Mr. Mottram, he's in such a way about Joe getting on, he thinks he can't begin too soon. But I've told your brother, Jill, that if Joe's headaches come on, I shall put a stop to it at once, for what's learning without health I should like to know? and Joe's not strong, though you wouldn't think it to look at him.'

Jill knew that if Jack had been there he would have laughed, and Martin would have looked incredulous; but Lance was all that was sympathising, and listened with the greatest apparent interest to a long and detailed account of Joe having the measles. Altogether he made himself so agreeable to Mrs. Mottram that she pressed him to stay on and dine with them, and never to mind about changing his clothes, as they had no company in the house and only Mr. Mottram, herself and Joe, to sit down with; and Jill was not sorry when Lance allowed himself to be persuaded to do so, as she was very doubtful of what sort of evening they were likely to have, and what mood Martin might be in; certainly Jack and Davy were not inclined to make themselves agreeable.

'It's no use, I suppose, asking you, Jill?' said Mrs. Mottram; 'there never was such a busy little mortal: one would think all the affairs of the nation were on your shoulders. There, good-bye, child; we won't keep Mr. Lance so late to-night as we did the other evening.'

As Jill was on her way home crossing the ravine, she came on Captain Nethercoat again, leaning over a

gate as if he were waiting for some one. 'Perhaps he is waiting for Lance,' she thought; and she turned out of her path and crossed the grass towards him, coming up so quietly that he gave a great start when she spoke to him, and turned with quite a look of terror on his face.

'I beg your pardon,' Jill said, 'but I thought you might be waiting for my cousin Lance; he is going to dine at Hill Park to-night, so he will not be coming just yet.'

Captain Nethercoat smiled and thanked her. 'You startled me,' he said; 'it is such a quiet place, and I did not hear you coming.'

'Did you think I was the ghost?'

'Is there a ghost?'

And then Jill, only too delighted, told the story of the Flower ghost and the buried plate, and was much gratified by the attention with which her story was received.

'Then, I suppose,' he said, 'this is not a very favourite resort after dark?'

'Oh, no!' said Jill; 'not one of the people will come near the place, they are so afraid of seeing the ghost; even the keepers don't come if they can help it, though they pretend they don't believe a word of the story.'

Captain Nethercoat walked a little way with her, and she showed him the place where the ghost was said to walk, and the places where she and the boys had made ineffectual attempts to find the hidden treasure. He was very pleased, she thought, and he asked after Mr. Flower, and said how sorry he was to hear that he was ill. 'Otherwise I should have been so glad to make his acquaintance.'

Jill offered to show him the short cut through the gap in the hedge, but he said he had to go back by the lodge, where he had left his portfolio, and they parted by the keeper's cottage. She had not gone far when she met a man coming down the path into the ravine. He was quite a stranger to her and was a rough-looking man in a fustian suit, and she wondered if he were a new gamekeeper, and hoped not, as he had a surly, disagreeable look about him, which was increased by a scar running from his eyebrow to his ear, which must have been an ugly, dangerous cut in its time. Perhaps he was a poacher, and she wished Jack had been there to follow him and see what he was after, and put West on his guard.

What a lot of strangers there seemed to be about the place to be sure! for just as she came out on the road beyond Bengrove a woman stopped and asked the way to Shettle. She was tall and slight, and wrapped in a long clinging cloak that made her look still taller and thinner; and she had a veil over her face, through which Jill could see two great, burning dark eyes, and a thin, worn face.

'A lady,' Jill thought, with that quick instinct children have; 'but a very poor lady and a very unhappy one.'

'I am going that way,' she said, 'and I will show you: it is not very far.'

The woman walked by her side in silence at first; but Jill was conscious that all the while those feverish eyes were scanning her face.

'Do you know where Mr. Flower lives?' the lady said at last.

'Yes, he is my father, and he lives at Bengrove, close here.'

The lady stopped. 'You are his daughter?' she said. 'I thought it must be, you are so like him.'

'Am I?' said Jill; 'they always say I am so like my mother. Why, even Lance is more like him than I am.'

'Lance? is that a brother of yours?'

'Oh, no! Martin and Jack and Davy are my brothers. Lance is a cousin who is staying with us. Do you want to see father?' Jill went on anxiously. 'He is ill, you know, and can't attend to any business. We try to keep him very quiet.'

They had reached Bengrove gate by this time, and the lady stood hesitating, and watching the gate as if she half hoped and half feared some one would come out, and Jill did not like to go in and leave her.

'I wish I could ask you to come in,' she said at last, 'but I don't think father could see you this evening, and we have no spare room now Lance is here; and nurse is away, so we could not make you very comfortable. Shall I tell father anything for you?'

'No,' the lady said quickly, 'it doesn't matter. I won't trouble him. Don't tell him anything about me. I expect he has troubles enough without mine.'

Jill held out her hand timidly; she knew that tea must be ready, and she wanted to make haste in. But the lady drew back almost with a shudder from the little outstretched hand, and put hers behind her back.

'No,' she said, 'you'd better not. You don't know:—' And then, with a sudden passionate impulse, she laid her hands on Jill's shoulders, and looked closely into her face. 'Is Lance like you?' she said. 'I should like to think he is, with eyes that look as if they were cut out of the very truth itself. You didn't get those eyes from the Flowers, child; they must have been your mother's.'

Jill was getting frightened; the pressure of the thin hands on her shoulders was almost painful, and the hot breath on her face, and the great sad eyes looking with such hungry bitterness into hers, bewildered and terrified her.

'Please let me go,' she said; and then quickly, before the lady could prevent her, raised her face and kissed the hollow wan cheek. That kiss set her free. The lady pushed her almost roughly away, with a cry as of sharp pain, and covered her face with her hands; and Jill waited for no more, but opened the gate and ran in, and full tilt into Jack's arms, where she clung trembling and out of breath, sobbing out so inarticulate an account of her adventure that Jack told Martin and Davy that she had been having a tussle with a tipsy man.

(To be continued.)

IN THE MINE.

THE salt mines of Galicia are among the largest in the world, the bed of fossil salt extending 285 miles east and west along the Carpathian Mountains. A visitor to these mines is amply repaid for his trouble and danger by the scenes of wonderful beauty which everywhere open to his sight. The pavement underneath his feet is of glittering salt; the roof is



supported by pillars of salt, each reflecting back a thousand flashes of light from the torches of the guides, and giving to the whole place the aspect of a fairy palace.


Far down in the depth of the mine is a vast lake of brine, still, deep, and motionless as the Dead Sea itself; while on the other side of this lake busy groups of workmen are to be seen with horses and drays laden with barrels of salt. The bones of elephants have more than once been found embedded in the mineral.

It is very necessary that visitors to the mines should take care that they do not get separated from their party, as there are tremendous chasms, deep, though narrow, into which if any one should fall they certainly never would be seen again. It has sometimes happened that a visitor has, by lingering over some specially beautiful sight, lost sight of his companions and guides, and one can imagine how terrible must be the anxiety of any one in such a position, till he once more find himself in the companionship of his fellows and in a place of safety.

McK.



A DISMAL LOOK-OUT.

 CROSS the moor the blinding snow
 Falls thickly, covering all the ground.
 Jem scarce can tell which way to go,
 He stands and gazes all around,
 Then listens—not a single sound.

The birds are cowering 'mong the trees,
 The butterflies are long since dead;
 And from the keen and cutting breeze
 The little squirrel hides his head,
 And sleeps within his cosy bed

Ah, Winter! many are your joys
 To those whose hearts are young and light:
 The mirthful girls, the laughing boys
 With smiling lips, and eyes so bright;
 But darker than the darkest night

To those who know not where to go
 To hide them from the piercing air,
 Who shiver in the falling snow,
 And find no pleasure anywhere.
 Let such as those your comforts share.

D. B.

A TRIP TO THE RHONE GLACIER.



SOME years ago we were staying at Lucerne, and being very anxious to see a great glacier, we decided to visit that of the Rhone.

We said good-bye to our kind Swiss friends, and left Lucerne by the eight-o'clock boat, on a dull July morning, having sent our luggage forward to Oberhofen on the previous day. It was very cold upon the water, but the rain kept off, although the sky looked grey and threatening.

We landed at Fluelen, and drove along the beautiful valley of the Reuss to Altorf. The great mountains towering on either side, the rushing, foaming river, and the luxuriant foliage of the walnut-trees, make this valley exceedingly picturesque. At Altorf we were taken to see the stone fountain, surmounted by the figures of William Tell and his son, and from thence we went to Amsteg, where we stayed for an hour's rest. The road then began to ascend through pine-woods to Geschenen, a pretty Italian-looking village. The houses, built of wood, were of a rich velvety-brown colour, and had balconies and overhanging eaves, and the walls were in some cases covered with small pieces of wood, put on like the scales of a fish.

After leaving Geschenen we entered a rocky defile, a scene of the most utter desolation, and gloomy beyond description. The granite cliffs, rising around us, were nearly perpendicular; a little scanty grass grew here and there, but most of the valley was strewn with huge stones and rocks which had slipped down from above. Terrible avalanches fall here in the winter, and in the most dangerous parts of the road there are covered galleries.

We crossed the famous Devil's Bridge, and pursued our journey as quickly as possible through Andermatt to Hospenthal, where we remained for the night. On the following morning we started early, hoping to make a successful trip to the glacier, and return to Hospenthal in the evening. But, alas! the weather proved most unfavourable. As we left the village the rain began to fall in slight showers, and the tops of the mountains were enveloped in clouds. However, we hoped for the best, and decided not to give up the expedition. The way led through the Urseren Valley, quiet, green, and sheltered, without trees, but with its meadows covered with flowers. This is one of the highest inhabited vales in Switzerland. Its pasturage is exceedingly good, and the peasants occupy themselves in rearing cattle and in making cheese.

The road now began to ascend rapidly in a series of zigzags. We had always a precipice on one side, its edge protected only by granite posts, set three or four yards apart. The road was very good, and just wide enough for two carriages to pass each other; but I must confess that when this happened, and we were on the outside, my heart was in my mouth, for it was fearful to look down. We were able to proceed only at a foot's pace; and presently my father

and sister got out of the carriage and walked, and the driver did the same. The weather now became worse; the rain turned to snow and the wind grew rough. My mother and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping ourselves warm and dry, for the carriage would not close properly, and the windows and doors had a way of flying open.

We drove into the clouds which hung upon the mountain-side, and out again into a clearer atmosphere; but the weather did not improve, and we soon found ourselves in the midst of winter. The mountain slopes were covered with snow, and the road also. My father and Maggie followed the carriages (there were three, and a diligence in front of ours), and plodded on bravely; but the snow was often up to their knees, and they were soon so wet and tired and frozen that they were compelled to seek shelter with us in the carriage.

Almost at the top of the pass we came to a spot where a party of men were busily engaged in clearing the road. An immense quantity of snow had fallen in the night, and the way had been completely blocked. We got past at last, six men holding up our carriage on one side to prevent it being upset, and went on to the Furca Hotel, where we were told that it would be quite impossible for us to proceed further.

We waited at the hotel for two hours, and then, as the sky seemed clearing a little, we persuaded our driver to take us to the Rhone Glacier Hotel, eight miles further, but two thousand feet lower down, where we hoped it would be a little warmer than at Furca.

I shall never forget that drive! Along a zigzag road, above precipices which seemed awful, and through snow-cuttings deeper than the height of our carriage.

At last we found ourselves safely at the hotel. As we had intended to return to Hospenthal, we had brought no baggage with us, and had not even a brush and comb! However, it was useless to grumble, and we reminded each other of Mark Tapley, and tried to feel 'jolly' under the very depressing circumstances.

The rain ceased during the afternoon; and finding that the glacier was only a short distance from the hotel, we decided to visit it at once, lest the weather should prove worse on the morrow.

How can I describe what we saw? A magnificent field of ice, all peaks and terraces and ridges, with cracks and crevasses of the most wonderful green colour. It came down from the sky-line between two mountain-peaks, all rugged above, but the lower part smooth. At the foot, and for many yards beneath the glacier, a grotto had been cut, into which we went with a guide. The ice around us was blue and transparent, and the grotto being warm, we found our umbrellas necessary. The floor was very slippery, so the guide coolly put his arm round mother's waist, and walked her along under his especial care.

After leaving the grotto we climbed upon the glacier, and crossing a few crevasses, went on until we could see the infant Rhone issuing from its blue cavern. Such a tiny stream!

After admiring it for some time we retraced our steps, mother having one bad fall before we got off

the ice. The glacier once extended much further down the valley. Each year it lessens a little, leaving only stones and desolation. The tract thus left is called the moraine, and is very difficult to walk upon. There are numerous little streams, over which planks are laid to serve as bridges. A drizzling rain began while we were on the moraine; but we continued our walk in spite of it, going to the end of the valley, across the Rhone bridge, and round into a ravine, along which the young river rushes, and is then hidden from sight under a thick covering of snow. It appears again further on, leaping from rock to rock in splendid falls, and with a deafening noise.

As we returned to the hotel the sky cleared again, and the blue of the heavens reflected upon the pure white snow was very lovely.

The next day was as fine as the last had been bad, and our return was most enjoyable. We walked for a long way up the zigzag road, the pure fresh air making even mother feel quite light and active. The sun was bright, and the atmosphere so clear that every mountain-peak was seen distinctly. The glacier was simply splendid, and the crevasses were such a wonderful colour. The opposite slopes were dotted over with Alpine roses, red and pink; we also found blue gentian, anemones, heartsease, and an endless variety of Alpine flowers, close to the very snow. The celebrated edelweiss we looked for diligently, but did not succeed in finding it.

We drove back to Hospenthal, and spent the night there, and on our way down to the lake on the following morning we got out to see the falls under the Devil's Bridge.

We did not reach Lucerne until late in the evening; but although very tired after our four days' expedition, I think we all thoroughly enjoyed our trip to the Rhone Glacier.

H. L. T.

A GUESSING STORY.

I AM a great traveller in my way, for I take long journeys over flat plains generally white as the snow, and wherever my little feet pass they leave a dark track behind them. Before I start, the friend who conducts me always refreshes me by a dip into a cold bath, and ever and anon as we go on our way I am revived by the same process. Refreshing as the plunge may be, no one who saw the dark wave would expect me to be cleansed by it; but without it all my expeditions would be in vain.

You must admit that I am unselfish, for it is not for myself I travel, but that my journeys may be useful to mankind. There are some lazy boys and girls who may wish I had never stirred my feet, for my excursions have caused them many a tedious and wearisome hour, yet to the bulk of mankind they have been the source of the highest delight. I have pointed out the way into all countries, languages, and sciences.

Yet, though my powers and my aims are so lofty, I condescend to the lowliest offices; and the poorest mother, pining for her absent child, has reason to thank me for the expeditions which I undertake to soothe her anxious heart.

To go back to my earliest days, perhaps it is be-

cause I first assisted the birds in their flight through the air that this instinct for travelling still possesses me. I often wear myself out in my journeys, and fall into such feeble health that nothing but an operation with a knife, sharp like the surgeon's, can cure my complaints.

I am fond of music, and often sing as I go along, though stupid folk, who cannot appreciate my powers, declare that I can only squeak. This often provokes me so much that I splutter out my rage and splash the water from my bath on the fair white plain around me. Sometimes I like to make my own path, going straight or crooked as it pleases me; at others I follow the line marked out for me, as you do when you go by the railway.

I am a person of many moods, blunt and obtuse, sharp and piercing, soft or hard, so you must take me as you find me. When my temper is sharp I am apt to show it, like a cat, by scratching.

There are a great many branches in our family, and I have many cousins who have never known the lofty origin which I boast, but have sprung from the depths of the earth. There is one family in particular, rich as Cræsus, who may be said to be made of gold. But for my own part I am above all sordid considerations, and prefer my celestial parentage.

And now I must wish you good-bye, for this journey over the white plains for your benefit has quite tired me out.

E. C. RICKARDS.

A PROOF OF REASONING.

A YOUNG Norwegian, who had frequently hired a horse of a peasant in his neighbourhood, which he liked much to ride on account of the goodness of his paces, having settled in a foreign country, after some time returned to visit his family. Upon this occasion he also called for the peasant, and asked after his favourite nag. The man told him, with tears in his eyes, that the horse was dead. Being asked the cause of the emotion he displayed, he related the following anecdote:—Having one day taken a ride upon his horse to a neighbouring town, he was so well entertained by some friends there that, in returning home, he felt his head too light for him to keep a firm seat on his saddle; the horse seemed sensible of this, and regulated his paces according to the state of the rider: but on coming to a hilly place, where the road was slippery from recent rain, he was unable to take as sure steps as before, and the rider lost his balance and fell from his saddle, with one foot hanging in the stirrup. The horse stopped, and twisted his body in various directions, in order to extricate his master, but in vain. At length, after having surveyed him for some time as he hung in this awkward plight, the horse laid hold of the brim of his master's hat, and raised his head a little by it; but the hat slipping off the man lay on the ground as before. The horse then laid hold of the collar of his coat, and raised him so far from the ground that he was able to draw his foot out of the stirrup; and having now become somewhat sober, he got upon his legs, mounted, and reached home in safety. The horse was ever after an especial favourite of his master, who kept him till he died.



Horse raising his Master from the Ground by the Collar of his Coat.



His Sketch.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 115.)

CHAPTER XVI.



HE boys held very much aloof from Lance next morning, and Jill felt quite sorry for him, he looked so lonely and melancholy, and his eyes kept following Martin about in a deprecating way, as if he wished to make up and be on the old friendly terms, and did not know how to set about it. He followed her out into the pantry after

breakfast, and asked if there was anything she wanted for her father.

'Isn't there anything I could get for him, Jill? Do tell me. I have some money; and I'm sure he ought to have all sorts of strengthening things—jelly and port wine, and those sort of things.'

Jill's eyes brightened, and then she shook her head.

'He'd be sure and ask where they came from, and how you got the money,' she said.

'Oh, the money's all right,' Lance said, only with a little uneasy heightening of colour. 'If you want to know, it was lent me by Captain Nethercoat. He's the most good-natured fellow in the world; and I dare say he knows what it is to be hard run himself. I met him yesterday morning when I went out. I didn't think of asking him, for I owed him something already; but he saw that something was wrong, and asked what it was; and when I told him, he put his hand in his pocket directly, and he seemed quite pleased to be able to help me.'

'How very good of him!' said Jill. 'But how will you ever pay him back?'

Lance shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

'That's such a very English way of looking at things,' he said. 'Captain Nethercoat knows very well that I'm a gentleman, and that his money's safe enough. He's not in any hurry; and I dare say I shall get a chance before long of paying him.'

He went with Jill when she went into the town, as nurse always did on Saturday morning, to give her few modest orders for Sunday; and she was rather glad of his company, for she had a nervous dread of meeting the strange white-faced lady who had behaved so curiously the day before. The sad pale face and burning eyes had haunted her dreams through the night; and once she had woken with a start, fancying she felt the pressure of those thin hands on her shoulders, and the hot breath on her face.

She had tried to describe her to Jack; but he had got so firmly into his head that Jill's encounter had been with some tipsy person, that she could not convince him to the contrary, or arouse much interest in the subject. She looked anxiously up and down the road as she came out of the gate, and was much relieved not to see her still lingering about under the elm-trees.

Lance was very urgent that Jill should let him pay for some of her purchases, or buy extra comforts for

Mr. Flower. But, though it was a great difficulty to such an inexperienced housekeeper to spin out the money as nurse managed to do, and though she was sorely tempted to get some dainty for father, she steadily refused Lance's entreaties, though she liked him so much for wishing it that she almost forgot the trouble he had caused the night before.

'I am sure father wouldn't like it,' she kept saying; 'you know he never would accept presents from any one if he could get out of it anyhow, even people he knew quite well, and I am sure he would not wish to from a stranger.'

'I'm not a stranger.'

'Oh, no! but it's not your money, Lance, if it's borrowed from Captain Nethercoat.'

Lance shrugged his shoulders, thinking, perhaps, again that this was a very English way of looking at things; and just then Captain Nethercoat himself made his appearance, who said he was on his way to Bengrove to see if any of the boys were going out fishing, and if they would come and dine with him.

Jill looked a little doubtful, thinking of 'The Bush'; but Captain Nethercoat, seeing her hesitation, explained that he had moved into some rooms at the Mill, as he found 'The Bush' noisy and uncomfortable.

'I shall be nearer my work too,' he said, 'for my friend Lance here tells me that there is no objection to my attempting a daub of Hill Park, and that I may go where I like about the place. You must come some day and see my sketches, Miss Jill; your brothers are kind enough to think them pretty.'

'I should like to very much,' said Jill; 'and I will ask father about the boys coming to you to-day; but —'

'I thought that perhaps as Mr. Flower is not very well, you and he might be glad to have those noisy youngsters out of the way for a few hours, and it's a charity to me, for the old miller is not the liveliest of company. Well, anyhow, I shall carry off Lance; and tell the other boys I shall look out for them between this and one o'clock.'

But when Jill got in she found that the three boys had gone off by themselves, and they did not turn up again till dinner-time, when it was too late to go to the Mill.

'And what do you think, Jill? We met old Mottram, and he wants Martin to go up and stay with Joe while they're away. He says Joe's in a regular funk at being left alone, and thinks of nothing but burglars and hobgoblins and ghosts. I expect that's all your doing, Jill, cramming him up about that old ghost in the ravine. He says he doesn't want Martin to coach him more than the two hours he bargained for, for you know, Jill,' said Jack, imitating Mr. Mottram's slow, pompous manner, "'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," as if anything in the world could make Joe duller than he is now! But he wants some one to keep him company; and if a fellow can't make out a jolly time of it up there with tennis, and rabbit shooting, and that pony, and all the rest of it, why, he must be a duffer!' said Jack with conviction. 'And there was Martin humming and hawing; and "didn't think he could be spared," and "wouldn't some one else be better;" and if I hadn't nudged him one minute and poked him another and interrupted him every other word,

he'd have backed out of it altogether, and that fellow Lance would have stepped in as easy as eggs.'

'Let him!' grumbled Martin. 'I don't want to go.'

'Get out!' said Jack; 'it will only be for a few days, and you'll live like a fighting-cock. Why, it will be almost like being master of the old place,' he went on, quite elated at the idea of Martin reigning even for a time at Hill Park; 'and you'll drive about the country and have no end of fun. Of course, Midas will be a bore, but that's nothing. I only wish he'd have asked the two of us, and we'd have had no end of a good time.'

'It will do Martin a lot of good,' Jack said in confidence to Jill. 'He's been rather down in the mouth since he fell out with Lance, or perhaps it's about his not going back to school, and father being ill; but altogether he's awfully grumpy, and it's just the very thing to jog him up a bit.'

'Do you think father will let him go?'

'Well, if Martin doesn't go, Lance will like a bird, and I know father won't like that. You know, Jill, I thought at first that the governor was a little bit funny about Lance, and that he wasn't half as bad as he made him out; but I'm beginning to think the governor was about right, for he's such a shifty, uncertain sort of fellow, one doesn't know where to have him, or if he's not humbugging half his time.'

'But father said we must be patient with Lance,' put in Jill, 'because he's never had a home or a mother like ours.'

'Has he ever said anything about his mother?' asked Jack. 'I never knew he had one till the other day, when Captain Nethercoat said he had seen her once, and that she was a great beauty.'

'They're separated, you know.' Jill told the mysterious fact in a low voice, and Jack nodded.

'Captain Nethercoat said she came to grief somehow, and I wanted to hear more about it, but Lance came up just then, and the Captain gave us a nod and a wink to hold our tongues. But I think Lance twigged what we were talking about, for he turned dark red and looked from one to another as if he'd have liked to strangle us. It's hard lines for him, and no mistake!'

Mr. Flower had no objection to Martin going up to Hill Park to keep Joe Mottram company while his father and mother were away, though Martin put the proposal in as unattractive a light as possible; but I think Mr. Flower shared Jack's opinion, that the change might be good for Martin both in mind and body, and he felt that it could not be regarded as any favour received from the Mottrams.

So Martin, as Jack said, was dished, and could not get out of it anyhow, and had to sit down, very growling and grumbling, to write a note to Mr. Mottram to say he would come on Monday; and Jack was so afraid of anything happening to interfere with the arrangement, that he offered to deliver the note himself, and persuaded Jill to come with him. He also proposed that they should look in at the Mill on the way back and explain to Captain Nethercoat how it was that they did not come to dinner; and Martin said he would come and meet them there, as Davy was installed in father's room to read to him, and to prevent Mary Anne from disturbing him.

When Jack and Jill reached Hill Park Joe came out and intercepted them, and brought them round through the garden to pay a visit to a certain plum-tree which required attention, and some early apples which Jack much admired.

Jill was quite glad that Martin was not there, as Joe did not conceal his wish that it had been one of the others who was to come and keep him company in his solitude.

'Martin always treats me as such a fool,' said poor Joe, 'and I dare say I am; but I don't like to be treated so any the more. Lance said last night that he'd be delighted to come, only father thought we'd better ask Martin first, as he was going to coach me. Lance is such a pleasant sort of fellow, any one can get on with him, and he likes just the same sort of things that I do; plays draughts, you know, and patience, and that sort of thing.'

Jack was happily prevented by those before-mentioned early apples from answering Joe immediately, or he might have expressed his opinion of Lance's pleasantness in rather too strong language; and when he was more capable of utterance, he had calmed down, and only said, 'Well, you're uncommonly lucky to get such a fellow as our Martin, I can tell you; he's worth a dozen Lances, and you'll find him awfully jolly when you're more used to him.'

But Jill felt misgivings in her heart as to how Martin would get on, and wondered a little if it would not have been better for them all round if Lance had gone; but there was Martin's acceptance written in his odd Greek-looking writing in Jack's pocket, so it was no use thinking of any change or upsetting the whole plan now.

When Joe heard that they were going home by the Mill, he said he would go with them, running into the house first to give Martin's note to his father. As they passed through the park, they came across Captain Nethercoat and Lance. The Captain did not seem to have decided yet from what point of view he would take his sketch of the house, though he had been wandering about the park all day, Joe said; but he told them that he wanted to make something really good of it, and he wished to judge of the effects of morning and afternoon light, so as to take it to the very best advantage.

'You're never going to take it from the back,' Jack said, 'where there's that long roof over the scullery! It's not a bit pretty, but we saw you this morning ever so long looking at that side of the place, as if it had taken your fancy.'

Captain Nethercoat was tremendously amused at the idea of his choosing the kitchen and offices for the subject of his sketch; but Jill fancied he was not quite pleased at the boys having been watching him.

They found Martin at the Mill when they arrived, and again Jill fancied that Captain Nethercoat was not quite pleased at finding him turning over some books and papers on his table; but Jill, in her quiet life with her father alone at Bengrove, had grown so used to watching his face and reading his slightest expression, that she was sometimes over-quick at reading other people's thoughts or imagining them.

'I say,' Martin said as they came in, 'what a jolly plan you have here of Lord Carbrook's house! It's that, isn't it? Oh, yes! don't you remember, Jack,



Lost !



Water-cress Gatherers.

the long conservatory by the drawing-room that you go through to get to the billiard-room? We went over two or three times last year, when father had some business to do with Lord Carbrook.'

Captain Nethercoat took the paper out of Martin's hand.

'Lord Carbrook's?' he said. 'Oh, no! that's the plan of my brother's house in Yorkshire. I drew the plan for him.'

'But it's exactly like Lord Carbrook's,' persisted Martin.

'That's a strange coincidence. And who is Lord Carbrook? and where is his house that's so wonderfully like my brother's?'

'Oh, don't you know the Garth? It's about eight miles the other side of Shettle. You ought to go over and have a look at it. It's the jolliest old place, and the Carbrooms are the real old family, and not new, vulgar——' Here Martin caught himself up, suddenly aware of Joe's presence, and Captain Nethercoat helped to cover his slip by bringing out his portfolio for Jill to see.

It contained some very pretty views of village streets and picturesque churches, and harvest-fields with groups of sunburnt reapers, and rivers with waggons and horses fording the stream, or boys fishing in it from a bridge. Jack and Jill and Joe were delighted with them, but Lance stood silently looking at them over Jack's shoulder, and did not echo the admiration they expressed, which made Jill look up at him more than once in surprise, as he was usually so ready with his compliments; but then, she thought, no doubt, he had seen them often before. Martin was at the other end of the room looking at some fishing-tackle about which the Captain was anxious to have his opinion.

'Hullo!' Jack exclaimed suddenly. 'I've seen this one before!' It was a group of boys sailing a boat in a pond under a willow-tree. 'It was up in one of the shops in Sherley for ever so long. Don't you remember, Mottram? Oh! Davy would remember in a jiffy, for we always said what duffers the fellows were to start the boat stern foremost. Don't you see, Jill?'

'It can't be the same,' said Jill; 'perhaps it was something like it.'

'It was as like as two peas,' said Jack, 'for we looked at it every time we passed; and there's the dog up on the bank and the weeds in the water, and all the rest of it.'

Lance took the sketch, and tossed it down on the table, saying in a low tone, 'You'd better shut up, Jack, the Captain won't like it.'

But Jack was not to be silenced, not seeing why Captain Nethercoat should dislike a facsimile of one of his paintings being seen at Sherley.

'Look here, Martin,' he said, 'this is the very identical picture I was telling you about at Sherley.'

Captain Nethercoat and Martin came up to the table, and the Captain laughed and began putting the sketches back into the portfolio.

'You're not very complimentary, Master Jack,' he said, 'to my original genius. A group like that is, I must confess, a little commonplace, and you'd see that sort of thing in fifty sketch-books. I did not know I had such a connoisseur to deal with.'

'But it was exact,' said Jack. 'I should just like you to have seen it. Look there, Martin, at the boat.'

Martin took it up and looked at it and then quickly at Captain Nethercoat, and the colour rushed up into his face, and he put it down and turned away.

'I think we ought to be going,' he said, 'or we shall be late for tea. Come, Jill.'

'Which was it you were looking at?' said Captain Nethercoat. 'Why, of course, you may have seen that in half-a-dozen shop windows, for that's a chromo-lithograph, and common enough. I wonder how on earth it got among my sketches. Won't you stay and have some tea?' he called after Martin, who was already out of the door, and striding along down the path with Jill's hand in his.

'No, thank you,' he answered, in rather a gruff tone; 'it's time we were home.'

'Why, Martin, what's this awful hurry about? what's the row?' asked Jack, overtaking him. 'Fancy that being a chromo after all, and my being right! But I'd have taken my davy, as old West says, that I'd seen it before. What's up, Martin? Here's Jill quite blown with being dragged along at such a rate.'

Martin stopped and let go of Jill's hand.

'What a set of fools he must have thought us!' he said between his teeth.

'Oh, I don't know about that!' said Jack; 'speak for yourself. I think it was rather cute of me to spot that chromo among the sketches!'

'Do you?' said Martin. 'But I think you'd have been a jolly deal cuter if you'd spotted that *all* those precious sketches were chromos.'

(To be continued.)

LOST.

A DREADFUL silence reigns around, my heart beats loud with fear,
I cannot tell which way to turn, yet dare not linger here;

The sun is sinking in the west, the hour of night draws nigh,

When from the forest dark and dense there comes the wild beasts' cry.

They warned me I would lose my way before the day was done.

I smiled to think of such a thing while shone the blessed sun;

But now the moaning wind I hear, and darkness steals around;

Oh, must I lay me down alone, to sleep upon the ground?

But no! I hear a distant cry, a long and anxious shout:

My friends with sympathetic hearts are searching round about:

Yes, yes, they come! they come! and while I see them drawing nigh

My heart in thankful songs of praise is raised to Heaven on high.

D. B.

THE WATERCRESS GATHERERS.

FROM great London's dun-brick alleys
 We must go at break of day,
 To the pleasant fields and valleys,
 O'er the upland far away.
 Mother's sick, and needs are many,
 Not a loaf and not a penny;
 Father's left us, hunger presses,
 We must gather watercresses.

We are sisters, born together,
 Every grief and joy we share;
 Sunny breeze, or stormy weather,
 Glee and plenty, tears and care,
 Happy when the sun is shining,
 In the darkness unrepining,
 Have we not life's chiefest blessing,
 Health and strength for watercressing?

Now our rival souls are burning,
 Which of us shall pluck the most;
 Burdened now, we are returning,
 With a song or happy boast,
 From the river, rock, and willow,
 To the smile on mother's pillow,
 When her wan white lip professes,
 Who e'er saw such watercresses?

Sometimes Envy darkly rises
 In a cold and rainy dawn,
 And she whispers, 'See what prizes
 In life's lottery are drawn!' But Content says, 'Every station
 Has its trials and vexation;
 Tears may fall on silken dresses:
 Sisters, onward to the cresses!

Many are the rich who languish
 Hopeless on a downy bed;
 Death untimely crowns with anguish
 Many a highborn lady's head;
 Kings and captains have their sorrows,
 Bright to-days and dark to-morrows;
 Ye have joys no prince possesses
 Till he gather watercresses!

Residents of modern Babel,
 We are toiling as you dream;
 We enrich your breakfast-table
 With fresh cresses from the stream;
 We are up, the sweet dew drinking,
 Ere your ball-room lamps are sinking;
 Ere my lady braids her tresses
 We are crying 'Watercresses!'

ANCESTRY NO OBSTACLE.

A GERMAN officer who had emigrated to the States succeeded in being admitted to the presence of the President Lincoln, and, by reason of his winning deportment and intelligent appearance, he was promised a lieutenant's commission in a cavalry regiment. He was so enraptured that he deemed it his duty to inform the President that he belonged to one of the oldest noble houses in Germany. 'Oh, never mind that,' said Abe; 'you will never find that to be an obstacle to your advancement.'

A WEATHER INDEX.

WHEN you wish to know what the weather is to be, go out and select the smallest cloud you see; keep your eye on it, and if it decreases and disappears, it shows a state of the air that is sure to be followed by fair weather; but if it increases in size, falling weather will not be far off. The reason is this: When the air is becoming charged with electricity you will see every cloud attracting all less ones towards it, till it gathers into a shower: and on the contrary, when the fluid is passing off or diffusing itself, even a large cloud will be seen breaking to pieces and dissolving.

A CLEVER ROGUE.

IN the last century people seem to have been much more ready to believe any rogue, who had a story of the marvellous to tell, than is the case at present.

There died at Schleswig in the year 1784 a man who had tested to the full the credulity of the world. Some years before this he appeared at various towns in Germany, calling himself the Count de St. Germain, and declaring that he had the elixir of life for sale. His success was soon such that he was advised to visit Paris. This he did, and played a prominent part at the court of King Louis XV.

But when a man says he possesses a medicine the use of which will prevent old age, the most natural answer is, 'Physician, heal thyself.' The new arrival saw the force of this argument, and at once gave out that his own life had been lengthened in a marvellous way by the use of this elixir. When his clients were ready to believe almost anything, he allowed his imagination full play. But his own knowledge of history was so great, his memory so good, and his wit so keen and ready, that he was rarely at a loss. Moreover, although about seventy years old at the time, he did not look more than forty-five. His servant, too, was a good second to his master.

One day at dinner the Count had been telling the company of an interview he had had with King Richard I. when crusading in Palestine. As some of those present did not conceal their surprise and doubt, the Count turned to his servant behind him and said,

'Did I not speak the truth?'

'I really cannot say, sir,' said the man; 'you forget that I have only been five hundred years in your service.'

'Of course,' said the Count, 'I remember now; it was a little before your time.'

The Count claimed a close acquaintance with most of the deceased European monarchs, and would tell his hearers of their general appearance and manners, relate scraps of conversation, particularly noticing the weather, and the time of day upon which they had taken place. During his stay in France he appeared to enjoy unlimited wealth, and his display of jewels and precious stones excited the envy of all who saw them. His enemies declared that he was a spy in the service of other governments, but they were never able to bring the charge home, and the impostor died without revealing his secret.

A. R. B.



RING THE BELL.

RING, ring the bell! Call out the noble crew,
 The hardy seamen, generous and brave,
 Who boldly dare what mortal man may do
 To rescue from the all-devouring wave.

Oh, fearful sight! a gallant ship on shore,
 The hissing waters bounding on their prey,

While the pale lightning and the thunder's roar
 Give added horror to this dreadful day!

Pale faces seen amid the snow-white foam,
 Look forth with agony that none may tell.
 And must they perish thus, in sight of home?

Oh! not if we can save them! Ring, ring the bell!

D. B.



"Lauce was still thinking of his Mother."

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 126.)

CHAPTER XVII.



WHEN Jill reached home that afternoon, she found that Dr. Wilson had been to see her father, and he came again on Sunday morning, and, on both occasions, he spoke very gravely of the necessity for perfect quiet, and said that nothing should be allowed to trouble or worry him, at any rate for the next few days.

The kind-hearted doctor felt, as he said it, that it was something like ordering mutton chops and port wine to a sick farm-labourer, or change and rest to a consumptive dressmaker; for how could quiet be arrived at with three boys home for the holidays, and an extra boy into the bargain? and how could worry be avoided when funds ran as low as he rightly suspected they did at Bengrove?

'Look here,' he said, as he came into the room, where the boys were just finishing breakfast, 'you'd better make yourselves as scarce as you can. A week's quiet will do more just now for Mr. Flower than all the doctor's stuff in the world. There's no chance of the holidays being over just yet, eh?'

Jack looked as if he would have liked to knock the doctor down at this juncture.

'Of course we can help making a row if we please,' he said indignantly, and by way of illustration got up in a hurry and knocked over his chair with a tremendous clatter.

'Quite so!' said Dr. Wilson. 'You're going up to Hill Park, I hear,' he said to Martin. 'It's a pity the rest are not going too. I should think young Mottram would be glad of a body-guard of protectors, especially since the robbery at Lord Carbrook's.'

'Robbery?'

'Lord Carbrook's?'

'Yes: you haven't heard of it? Yesterday evening while they were at dinner, Lady Carbrook's bedroom was entered, and all her jewels carried clean off. It was done in the neatest way possible. They put a ladder against the billiard-room and got on the roof, and then across the wall at the back of the conservatory, which is just under her ladyship's window. They put a wedge under the door, and, when one of the maids came up in the evening, she thought her mistress was there, and went down again; so it was not till after the thieves had made a clean sweep and got clear away that any alarm was given. Of course, the police are in a fine fuss about it, and a detective has come down from London; but, as far as I can hear, there is not the slightest clue, and I very much fear that Lady Carbrook has seen the last of her pearls and diamonds.'

The boys were greatly excited at this robbery; and Jack had a strong conviction that he could find out all about it, if he could only get to the scene of action; and if Martin had encouraged the idea, he and Davy would have started off then and there to offer

their services to the detective; but Martin would not hear of their cutting church even for the sake of Lady Carbrook's jewels, though, I am afraid, those pearls and diamonds interfered considerably with their devotions.

This new excitement seemed at first to smooth over the differences between Lance and his cousins, for he was quite as much, if not more, interested than they were, and listened with absorbed attention to every detail they could glean from one and another about the affair; and when Captain Nethercoat joined them on the way to church, he also was so interested that all, except Martin, forgot the episode about the chromos, and talked away as friendly as ever; and Jack had invited him to come and sit with them in their seat before a nudge from Martin could prevent him.

Captain Nethercoat had heard a good many more details of the robbery than Dr. Wilson had told them, and he was also strongly of opinion that he had seen the burglars themselves the evening before, when two very suspicious-looking characters had passed him just outside Shettle, going in the direction of Woodleigh.

'What were they like?' asked Jill, with a sudden recollection of the man she had met in the ravine. 'Had either of them a scar on the side of his face?'

'A scar?' said Captain Nethercoat, rather thoughtfully; 'no, I think not. One of them was marked with the smallpox. They were both of them great, big, brawny-looking fellows. I should know them again anywhere.'

'Oh, come on!' said Jack; 'let's try to find them. I dare say we should get no end of a reward. Were they going in the Woodleigh direction, did you say? Two great, big men? and one of them marked with smallpox? I say, Martin, do you think father would mind our going to Woodleigh this afternoon? We'd be back in time for tea and church this evening.'

'You young duffer,' said Martin; 'do you think they'll stand there till you go and catch them? Why, they're miles away by this time—in London, or perhaps out of England.'

'Of course they are,' said Captain Nethercoat. 'It's not such an easy matter to catch thieves, Master Jack.'

But Jack was not to be discouraged from the attempt, and after dinner he and Davy set off in the Woodleigh direction, determined, at any rate, to trace the two men part of the way by which they had carried off the jewels.

Mr. Flower had not allowed Jill to stop away from church on his account in the morning; but this afternoon she established herself in his bedroom, and Martin soon after followed her in on tiptoe, and sat down in the window, while Jill fetched her mother's little old Bible to read the lessons for the day, as she had done every Sunday since she could first make out the holy words with father's help.

It was very quiet, and through the open window came the sound of some distant church bells ringing for afternoon prayers. A great cluster of monthly roses was in bloom just outside, and Martin pulled the branch in and buried his face in the cool, pink flowers. He did not know that some of the petals fell as he shook the branch down on to Lance's head

who was standing under the window, rolling a cigarette in his hand, and biting his lips in indecision and perplexity.

He had been feeling very ill at ease all the morning, and had more than once made up his mind to tell Martin his uncomfortable suspicions, and ask his help; but Martin had ignored his friendly overtures, and nipped any attempt at confidence in a most discouraging manner.

After Jack and Davy had set off on their walk, and he and Martin were left alone together, he would have begun the subject, but Martin got up to go upstairs; and when Lance said 'Martin,' he pretended not to hear, and went off without a word, leaving Lance hurt and angry, and he followed Martin out into the hall and called after him,—

'I'm going to Captain Nethercoat's, if any one wants to know.'

And Martin turned, as he went upstairs, with a disagreeable smile, and said,—

'He's just the right sort of friend for you, I should think. I wonder you don't take to sketching like him.'

He was sorry the moment he had said it, and he hesitated a minute before he opened his father's door, half inclined to go after Lance and make it up; but he heard the front door close, and thought it was too late.

But Lance stood outside in the pleasant August sunshine, mechanically rolling a cigarette between his fingers, and, as he stood there, the sound of Jill's soft little voice reading came through the window above, and a shower of sweet pink rose petals fell on his upturned face, bringing back to his mind, with that strange, mysterious connexion of ideas, an indistinct memory, or it might only have been a dream of very early childhood, of a mother's soft kisses and gentle voice.

'I won't go to Captain Nethercoat's,' he said to himself; and without caring where he went as long as it was not to the Mill, he turned into the fields that led by the gap in the hedge to the ravine.

He was still thinking of his mother, and wondering if he should have been a different sort of fellow if he had had a mother like others, or the lovely memory of a mother like Martin and Jack; and he did not notice a woman who was standing by the gate through which he passed into the fields, and who looked hard at him as he went by, and then turned and followed him at a little distance.

It was the same woman who had spoken to Jill, only her face was whiter and her eyes more hollow and bright than they had been even two days before, and her step was more slow and dragging, as if every movement were an effort almost beyond her strength. She kept him in sight till he had reached the hedge; but when she had painfully scrambled through the gap, she could see nothing of him among the thick trees and high-growing underwood and bracken, and could not tell which way he had gone.

She pushed on for a little way, till she reached almost exactly the place where little Jill had been shot, and from whence she could see down into the ravine, with the stream running at the bottom, and the ruinous cottage, half smothered in ivy, nestling among the trees, which thickly clothed both sides of

the ravine with their heavy summer foliage, hardly touched as yet with autumn's warm hand.

It was a lovely, peaceful scene; but the weary, exhausted woman, was in no state to notice or admire the beauty round her, and she sank down on the soft mossy turf among the fern, looking up through the delicate fern fronds and overarching boughs to the blue sky, which seemed to her to look more kindly down on her than skies or eyes had looked of late, bringing back to her mind the thought of One who pitifully beholds the sorrows of our hearts and mercifully forgives the sins of His people.

(To be continued.)

THE SMUGGLER'S SON.

IT was a rough and angry coast, where the sea, time after time, had by its resistless violence made great inroads on the land, tearing away acres of meadow and hurling down huge rocks, which lay scattered on the beach as trophies of its mighty power. Among the nooks and crannies of these rocks rough stone cottages might be seen, as brown and grim in appearance as the wild-looking race who inhabited them; rough and hardy indeed they were, and not over-honest either, for, truth to tell, the men on that wild coast were fishermen only in name, their true calling being to smuggle French brandy and fine laces whenever the preventive men would give them a chance.

They were indeed freebooters, and desperate fellows enough in an encounter with the revenue cutters, several of which had occurred since Stephen Ryot had grown to manhood.

This man was a noted leader among the smugglers, and, perhaps, the worst and most daring of them all.

His wife had died a few years after marriage, leaving him with one gentle little boy, as unlike as possible to his dark-faced father, who, nevertheless, felt for the innocent little fellow a deep and abiding affection.

As he grew from infancy to boyhood, Stephen concealed from him, as far as he could, the nature of his calling, though, of course, the time came at last when little Phil knew about it all too well; though to feel that his father was a noted smuggler did not shock him as it might have done other boys who were differently brought up.

Phil saw no evil in this desperate calling; the sin of it was quite unknown to the poor boy; but he well knew its danger, and loving his father as he did with the warmest affection, his young heart often beat with a terrible anxiety when he knew that the men were abroad, when the wind roared, and the thunder of the waves shook the little cottage to its very foundations.

It did not distress him to be left alone in the house for days and nights together, though during these times he saw no one to speak to. One of Stephen's strictest injunctions being that Phil should never stir out of the house during his father's absence from home.

Nor was he idle at such times; he had work to do,—cooking work and sewing work,—for Phil Ryot



Phil looking out for his Father.

could mend his clothes, and his father's too, as neatly as could any woman. But when his tasks were all accomplished, an hour of happiness came to the lonely boy. He would climb up the strong supporting beam that ran through the cottage from cellar to attic, and gazing out at the upper window, he would watch for any symptom of the little boat's return.

When he caught sight of the distant sail, how joyfully he slid down again, and busied himself in preparing a comfortable meal for his dear father's comfort on arriving at home!

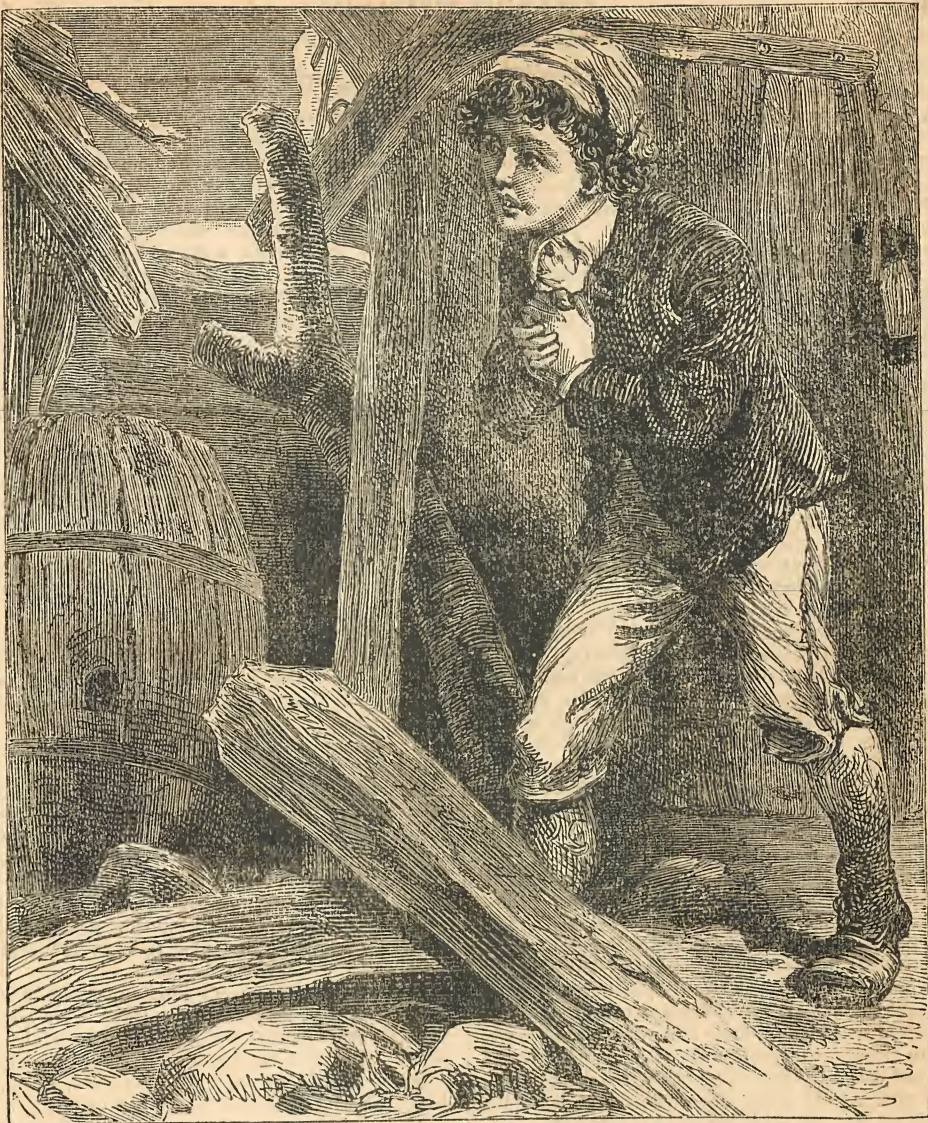
Phil never questioned his father as to where he had been; it would have displeased Stephen had he done so; therefore the boy saw bundles and baskets brought up from the boat and carried away again

to safe hiding without knowing either what those baskets contained or what became of them. Stephen's object in keeping Phil in ignorance being that, in the event of a search being made by the revenue officers, the boy might know nothing, and so not be involved in his father's danger.

It chanced one night, in the dead of winter, when snow lay deep on the ground, that Phil had gone to bed, leaving his father smoking and drinking in the kitchen below.

Suddenly a low tap came to the door, which was cautiously opened by Stephen.

'Hist,' said the visitor, a bold and reckless smuggler; but speaking in an undertone. 'Hist, Stephen Ryot, the cutter is away to-night, miles to the westward, on a fool's errand, after Joe Baynton and his



Phil gazing out to Sea in the Storm.

gang. Now is our time, the coast is clear, and the signal is flying.'

'But a storm is coming,' said Stephen, doubtfully. 'We'd get into an awful mess if we fell in with the cutter before we got home again.'

'Oh, never fear!' replied the other. 'Come, we must be off in half an hour. Go, and tell your boy, while I look after the boat.'

And Stephen began to get ready. Rousing Philip, he told him, as usual, not to leave the house, to speak to no one, and to be as happy as he could.

'All right, father,' said Phil, cheerfully; 'take care of yourself, and never mind me.'

Then, as his father turned away, closing the door behind him, the boy curled himself up in his nest once more, and was soon sound asleep.

But not for very long did he lie in quiet repose. A vivid flash of lightning, followed by a crashing peal of thunder, awoke him, and starting up in bed, he sat gazing round him appalled at the inky darkness, only illumined by the flashing of the terrible lightning.

The wind, which had been gradually rising, was now approaching a hurricane; the tide was nearly at the full, and the water was thundering in great billows close up to the very door.

'Oh! where will father be just now?' thought the poor boy. 'The boat will be lost on such a terrible morning as this, and the house will never stand these shocks. When the tide is full, the cottage will certainly be swept away.'

The prospect was indeed alarming. Already the

waves had encircled the hut, and were dashing on the lower windows, flooding the cellar and kitchen; and in an hour matters would be much worse, as the tide would then be full.

Hurriedly putting on his clothes, Phil crept down stairs, but found himself knee-deep in water, while the very foundations of the cottage seemed to be giving way.

The terrified boy then clambered up again to the top of the house, where he listened with a despairing heart to the booming of the waves and the crashing of timber, which told that still another supporting beam had given way.

The gray dawn of a winter morning was just breaking over land and sea as the deserted boy took his stand on a projecting part of his ruined home, and clasping his hands in the anguish of his heart gazed out to sea, hoping to see some sign of the little boat which might yet bring his dear father to the rescue.

Alas! little Philip, that well-known boat, that dearly-loved father, you never more shall see, for, already swamped and swallowed up in the bewildering waters, the stout smugglers' boat, with its load of contraband merchandise and the bold hearts that guided it, lies at the bottom of the sea.

It was about the same hour of that wild winter morning that the revenue cutter with her bold crew, while returning to the station after its ineffectual pursuit of Joe Baynton and his gang, saw from a distance the desperate condition of the rough brown cottage, known as Ryot's den: they could also see the figure of the forlorn boy, and could almost think they heard his cries for help and succour: but they were themselves in considerable danger from the wind and waves, and ere they could possibly assist little Phil they must get to land themselves.

Having with much difficulty reached the station, they were not long of starting for the Smugglers' Cove. Alas, what a sight met their eyes! The timbers of the cottage collapsed and fallen, the stones and thatch all blown down, and the boy himself floating on a plank of wood, and apparently drifting quickly out to sea. When rescued by his rough but kind-hearted neighbours, little Phil was almost gone, and quite unable to speak. He was carried to the station and carefully nursed by the wife of one of the revenue men, and in a few days was able to leave his bed and sit in the wide window-seat, where he gazed out at the sea for hours at a time. Poor lad! he had been told of his father's death, and his heart was very sore. He naturally looked upon the revenue men as his father's enemies, and almost resented the knowledge that he owed his life to their kindness.

But Phil was too gentle a boy to retain such feelings long. As time went on his mind gradually opened to the truth; he saw that his father's calling had been not only dangerous but wrong, and though he never ceased to love and cherish his memory, he had no wish to follow in his steps. He became much attached to the men who had rescued him from death, and remained on with them at the station, and after some years of schooling and proper training young Phil Ryot, the smuggler's son, became one of the most active and trusty of the crew who manned her majesty's revenue cutter.

M. K.

FROM THE RANKS TO A THRONE.

DURING the struggle in India between the British and Tippoo Sahib, a body of our troops, together with some Hanoverians, had an encounter with the French under Bussy at Cuddalore. Victory declared itself for our side, and the enemy suffered severe losses. Amongst the wounded who fell into the hands of the British was a young French sergeant. His appearance and manners, by which he was readily distinguished from his fellow-prisoners, drew upon him the notice of Colonel Wangenheim, who commanded the Hanoverians. Struck by the sergeant's ways, he ordered him to be conveyed to his own tent. This was done; and there the young Frenchman received every care and kindness until his release.

Years passed away, and the time came when a victorious French army entered Hanover. Amongst those who went to present themselves before the conqueror was General Wangenheim. The marshal eyed him with attention, and said,—

'You have served a good deal, I understand, in India?'

'I have,' was the reply.

'At Cuddalore?'

'I was there.'

'Have you any recollection of a young sergeant, whom you took under your protection on that occasion?'

The general did not at first remember the event, but presently said,—

'I do, indeed, remember it, and a very fine young man he was. I have lost sight of him ever since; but it would give me pleasure to hear of his welfare.'

'That young sergeant,' replied the marshal of France, 'now has the honour to address you. He is happy in having this opportunity of acknowledging the obligation, and will omit no means within his power of showing his gratitude to General Wangenheim.'

Nor was his then proud position, as one of France's most successful generals, at a time when her skilful generals were many, the highest reached by Bernadotte. In 1818 he became King of Sweden, and occupied the throne until the year 1844, when, at his death, he was succeeded by his son Oscar.

A. R. B.

HENARE TARATOA.

HENARE TARATOA was a Maori chief. He was a Christian, and had, when a boy, been educated at St. John's College, Auckland, under Bishop Selwyn. When war broke out between the English and the natives of New Zealand, in 1865, Henare (Henry) took the side of his own people. As general, he commanded the native forces during the encounter with the English at Gate Pa, which ended so disastrously for the latter. The English troops were panic-stricken, and several of their officers, both naval and military, were left inside the Maori redoubt, severely wounded, at the close of the fight. One of the number, who was dying of his wounds, was tended by Henare all night, and, as the tide of life ebbed fast away, he begged piteously for a little water.

But, alas! there was no water within the Maori lines nearer than three miles, and the 'fiery thirst of battle-fields,' which cannot wait to be quenched, was on the dying man. But just within the English lines, close at hand, there was water. Henare's resolve was quickly taken. Silently, cautiously, he crept through the fern, drawing nearer and nearer to the enemy, until at last, beyond the English lines, and within reach of the unconscious English sentry, he filled his calabash with the precious water. Then he retraced his way, reached the Maori redoubt in safety, and held to the parched lips of his enemy the cool draught he had risked his life to procure.

A few days after another engagement took place. The English charged the Maori rifle-pits, and the defenders, driven from their position, slowly retreated. They faced the enemy to the last with undaunted courage, and were bayoneted every one. Among them fell the young chief and general, Henare. On his body were found the 'Orders of the day' for fighting. These began with a form of prayer, and ended with the following words in Maori: 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him: and if he thirst, give him drink'—no idle words to him who had risked his life to obey their teaching.

A window on the south side of the private chapel at Lichfield is filled with stained glass, representing David pouring out the water which the soldiers had fetched from the well of Beth-lehem at the risk of their lives (1 Chron. xi. 17-19). This window is intended specially to commemorate Henare Taratoa and his act of chivalry. He sleeps on the other side of the globe, but even here, in England, his memory is held in honour.

C. P. G.

THE VENTRILOQUIST.

A Story of Long Ago.

IT was on a cold winter evening that a traveller on horseback rode up to a wayside inn, and, throwing the reins to the ostler, dismounted stiffly and wearily. The ruddy light of the wood fire which blazed on the old-fashioned hearth of the inn parlour glanced on the stranger as he stooped and spread his hands to catch the warmth. It shone on a kind, good-tempered face, a pair of twinkling eyes, and a long and bushy beard.

The inn-keeper bustled in, and made a remark upon the weather and the storm of snow that seemed likely to come upon them before daybreak.

'And what may I get the gentleman for his supper?' he asked presently. As he waited for his answer his eyes caught sight of the stranger's gold chain and the bunch of seals that glittered in the firelight.

'Let me have some cold meat and a mouthful of bread and cheese; and warm me a tankard of beer, my friend. I must go on my way in a few minutes, for I have a long ride before me ere I can hope to "turn in" for a night's rest.'

Then the traveller went back to the fire again and rubbed his cold hands, evidently wishing to make the most of the short spell of warmth that he could allow himself.

Master Filman, the innkeeper, gave a little sniff as he left the room to see after these simple wants. He

hoped to have made something out of this stranger before he left his roof again; and now he had ordered just the plainest food: yet he was certainly rich. What a splendid chain that was! and had he not a diamond ring on his finger?

Mr Thornley, the traveller, ate his supper in silence, and after settling with his host and bidding him a 'Fair good-night,' he rode off into the dark shadows of the lane.

As soon as he had started Master Filman pulled on a pair of top boots and took down a heavy cloak from a peg behind the door. With one glance to see how far the stranger had gone down the lane, he snatched up his fur cap and a stout stick and went after him, following him stealthily as he rode slowly on. His plan was to overtake the traveller in a lonely wood, which he could reach by a short-cut across the fields, and then to have a tussle with him for his gold.

The traveller rode on, with his mind full of pleasant thoughts of the home where his dear ones would be so glad to see him; and he whistled softly to cheer his weary nag, and give vent to his own spirits.

In this way he entered the lonely wood, through which the road ran; the moonlight lay in uncertain patches on the ground, and the wind moaned mournfully among the branches. But the rider had no fear, and he spoke to his horse with kindly words, as a man talks to his friend.

Master Filman crept nearer as the horse stepped slowly over the uneven ground, and was just beginning to call out to the rider to stop, when to his amazement a man started from behind a tree a few yards in front of him, and crying, 'Halt, for your life!' confronted Mr. Thornley, pistol in hand, and Filman like a coward took to his heels, lest the robber should tackle him as well.

But Mr. Thornley at the startling appearance of the highwayman reined in his horse and sat perfectly still, waiting for the next movement on the part of his assailant. He was a brave man, and in those few seconds had made up his mind what course to take. He knew he had possessed a weapon which had served him many a good turn already.

As the robber advanced to his horse's head, still levelling the pistol at him and twice repeating the terrible warning, 'Move, and you are a dead man!' Mr. Thornley opened his lips to speak. At the same moment a voice, gruff and husky, called out behind the highwayman, 'What are you up to now, man?'

The robber turned half round with a start, but could see no one.

Instantly another voice on the opposite side of the road cried, 'Take care what you're doing! Leave the man alone or you'll have this in you.' And he heard the click of triggers.

The solitary robber took alarm. He dropped his pistol and fled in panic.

Mr. Thornley watched his retreating figure as it vanished into the night; then he laughed until he nearly rolled out of his saddle.

As he rode out of the shadows of the wood into the open country, he looked up into the dark vault of Heaven and thanked God for the gift of that power to ventriloquise which had that night been the means of saving him from disaster, and perhaps even from death.

MOLLIE.



Mr. Thornley riding off.



Lance watching Captain Nethercoat filling up the Rabbit-hole.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 131.)

CHAPTER XVIII.



LANCE had made his way down into the ravine that Sunday afternoon. It was all quiet down there, with only the buzz of the gnats in the sun, and an occasional 'twit-twit' of the swifts who darted hither and thither after the flies. Lance was not at all given to solitary meditation, and generally preferred any company to his own; but this afternoon his mind was strangely full of his mother and the few things he could remember or had been told about her, and of a portrait he had seen once of a girlish face and laughing eyes.

It made him forget for a time all about Captain Nethercoat and his distrust of him, which was really stronger and better founded than Martin's, which, after all, was good part of it wounded vanity at having been taken in by the chromos. Lance had found out that they were none of them real sketches, and had come to a pretty sure conclusion that all Captain Nethercoat's pretensions to being an artist were about as *bonâ fide* as the sketches in his portfolio, and he could not make out why he should keep up the pretence and make such a parade of choosing a good point of view for his sketch of Hill Park.

Lance was, as we have seen, not averse himself to humbugging, but it was always with some distinct object in view, and he could not make out what Captain Nethercoat's could be, for this and one or two other similar pretences that had come to Lance's knowledge since he had been so much in his company.

However, this afternoon as he sat in a pleasant, shady, little nook, among the bushes by the stream, his mind was occupied with other thoughts, and, presently, the drowsy warmth of the afternoon, and the soothing hum of the insects, turned his thoughts insensibly into dreams, and he was a baby-child in his mother's arms, with her kisses, soft as rose-petals, falling on his eyes and forehead.

He must have slept some little time, and he woke with a start at a sound close by which yet seemed to have been mingling with the dreams for some time.

As he sat with his back against the trunk of an ash-tree, he was quite concealed by the thick undergrowth between him and the cottage and the path leading to it, and he had evidently not been seen by the person whose movement close by had aroused him. He parted the branches softly to see who it was, and then kept quite still, hardly drawing a breath lest he should be overheard, and watching the movements of a man who was apparently busily employed in filling up a large rabbit-hole in the bank behind the cottage. He was doing it very carefully, and, when the hole was filled, he dragged a branch of ivy across the place, and some brambles that grew near, and scattered some dry moss and dead leaves about so that no one could have told that the earth had been disturbed. Every now and then he would stop and look round and listen; but though his eye

glanced repeatedly over the bush close by Lance, he never saw him, but went back to his work till it was finished to his liking, then hid the trowel with which he had done it in a bush, turned down his wristbands, brushed some earth and moss from his coat, settled his hat jauntily, took up his tightly-rolled umbrella, and set off up the path.

It was Captain Nethercoat, as Lance's first glance through the bushes had assured him; but what he was doing, and why it was done in so stealthy a manner, Lance could not imagine. He had kept quite still with every nerve on the strain to keep from the slightest movement, and Captain Nethercoat was walking away up the path as neat, and dapper, and jauntily as if he were going up the street at Shettle, and in half a minute more would have been out of earshot, when a dry stick under Lance's foot gave a loud crack, and the next minute the Captain was back, pushing aside the bushes, and Lance, feeling that any further attempt at concealment was useless, rose to his feet and stood confronting him. For a moment there was silence, and then the Captain spoke in rather a forced, unnatural voice.

'Hullo, Lance!' he said; 'who'd have thought of seeing you here, when you promised to come to the mill?'

'I shouldn't have found you there, you see,' Lance answered, with a little, uneasy laugh, avoiding meeting Captain Nethercoat's eyes, which were scanning his face very searchingly.

'Yes you would, in ten minutes or so. Now, look here,' he went on, suddenly altering his tone, and laying his hand heavily on Lance's shoulder, 'did any one set you on spying after me? or is it your own little game?'

'I don't know what you mean,' Lance said, angrily shaking off his grasp. 'I came for a walk here and fell asleep as I sat under the tree, and when I woke just now I saw you by the bank; but that's all I know or care.'

Captain Nethercoat was silent for a minute, whistling softly between his teeth, looking at Lance till Lance, resenting his scrutiny, turned and prepared to go.

'Where are you off to?'

'To Bengrove.'

'No, you don't. You're coming back to the mill with me.' And Captain Nethercoat slipped his hand under Lance's unwilling arm and turned him round in the direction of the path.

'Look here, you mustn't mind what I said just now. I'm a bit peppery, and nothing puts me up like being watched. Why, I've given fellows in the West Indies a taste of my revolver on less provocation than I felt just now when I found you here. Oh, yes! I'll take your word for it that you were not spying, and after all, if you had, there was nothing to see, only a man doesn't like to think his steps are dogged.'

He went on talking as they went up the path with his eyes fixed on Lance's downcast face; but if he were trying to assure himself from Lance's expression, or his few short answers, that it was a matter of no consequence that could be passed over and thought no more of, he apparently failed, for as they came out into the road he changed his tone.

'Well,' he said, 'perhaps it's lucky that I met you, for I wanted to ask if you could pay me back that little loan . . . Yes, I know I told you that there was no hurry about repaying it; but I have had rather a stiff bill sent in this morning that I'm bound to meet, so, if it's not inconvenient to you, I should be glad of that trifle to help make it up.'

Trifle! it was no trifle to Lance. It was not only the money to repay Jill, but enough to pay off two or three so-called debts of honour that he had incurred at the 'Bush;' and Captain Nethercoat had pressed upon him more than enough to cover these, with what had appeared wonderful generosity at the time. He seemed to have no lack of money then, and Jill's talk of repayment had struck Lance as petty and mean by the side of such open-handed liberality.

'I'm awfully sorry!' he said, 'but I don't know how I can repay it directly. You see, my uncle is so ill, and the doctor says it's as much as his life is worth to worry him, and I don't know where my father is, and it's twenty chances to one if he's any spare cash.'

Captain Nethercoat walked along some paces in silence, knitting his brows as if in deep and difficult calculation; but at last he seemed to have arrived at some conclusion.

'Well,' he said, 'I hardly know how it's to be done, but I must try and manage without. One doesn't mind trying to make a shift for a friend like you, Lance, who would do the same for me if I was hard run.'

'Of course I would,' Lance said hastily, greatly relieved at the prospect of escape from the immediate payment of his debt. 'I told you that the money was safe with me, and that it would be repaid as soon as possible.'

'Oh, never mind about that!' Captain Nethercoat said; 'as long as I don't want the money, you are free to keep it. Eh, do you understand?'

They had reached the turning to the mill, and the Captain stood still facing Lance, and speaking very slowly and meaningly, with his eyes fixed on Lance's face.

'You are free to keep it, I say, as long as —'

'I hold my tongue,' Lance said quickly.

There was no mistaking the meaning of Captain Nethercoat's face. But the Captain treated it as an immense joke, and burst into what sounded to poor Lance most discordant laughter, swaying himself backwards and forwards as if quite overcome by the humour of the notion.

'Why, you said that just like your Cousin Jack! I had no notion there was such a likeness! As blunt and down-right as him. But, 'pon my word, that's about the long and the short of it, so suppose we shake hands on the bargain;' and he wrung Lance's cold, unwilling hand with a boistrous heartiness. 'There's an old play I've heard of called "A New Way of paying Old Debts," so perhaps we've found out the way by holding our tongues. By Jove! it's an uncommonly good way, and I only wish some of my creditors would see the force of it. Well, you want to be off, do you? So ta-ta; I shall expect you at ten to-morrow. Don't forget our bargain!'

And Lance could hear the Captain laughing to

himself over the joke as he turned into the mill, and could not see how that forced merriment withered on his lips a moment afterwards, and was succeeded by a look of restless annoyance and haggard anxiety; while Lance went back to Bengrove with a weight on his heart and a feeling as if he would not dare to look any one in the face, though he told himself angrily that he had done nothing to be ashamed of, and, even if the Captain had said nothing of his debt, he should not have told any one what he had seen in the ravine.

(To be continued.)

THE APPLE.

THE Crab, or Wild Apple, is found in almost every country of Europe. Its flowers are white, shaded with pink, and grow in such profusion that the young leaves are hidden by them, and the tree appears to be one mass of blossom. The fruit of the common English crab is small, hard and sour, but the Chinese and Siberian crabs, so often seen in gardens and shrubberies, bear little red apples which are valuable for preserving.

The fruit of the crab has, of course, been improved by cultivation, and the varieties of good and beautiful apples now grown in England, France, and America, are far too numerous to mention. The Romans, in the time of Pliny, esteemed the apple very highly, and considered those persons worthy of honour who cultivated it successfully. The Druids in our own land prized it for the sake of the mistletoe, which is frequently found growing upon its branches; and in later times the English monks turned their attention to this useful tree, and planted it freely in their gardens and orchards.

A favourite variety of apple in the thirteenth century was the Costard, and the street-sellers of fruit and vegetables were then known as costard-mongers. This name, corrupted into *coster-monger*, is still in daily use. The Pippins were first brought from France, in the days of Henry VIII., and were so called because they were raised from the pips, or seeds, and did not require grafting.

Yorkshire and Kent have long been famous as apple counties, and in Devonshire, Worcestershire, and Herefordshire, the fruit is largely grown for the purpose of cider-making. The first cider-orchards in Herefordshire were planted in the reign of Charles I.

The apple is a wholesome and nourishing fruit, and the French peasants, who eat less meat and more vegetable food than their English neighbours, find it very useful. Great quantities of apples are dried in Normandy, and exported to all parts of the world. They are known as Normandy Pippins, and require soaking before they are cooked. The Americans also cultivate the apple very successfully, both for their own use and for exportation.

The first day of November was known in olden times as La Mas Ubhal, or 'Day of the Apple,' and it was the custom on the preceding evening to drink a beverage composed of roasted apples, ale, spice, and sugar. This mixture is still made in some country places, and is called Lamb's-wool—a quaint corruption of the original name.

H. L. T.



A CALCUTTA PORTER.

THIS is a picture of a porter, or doorkeeper, in a warehouse in Calcutta. He is of high caste or rank, as it is called amongst the natives in the East Indies. The string of beads or seeds round his neck shows that he is a 'high-caste' native. He has

carried his bed—which is called a *charpoy*—to a convenient place, and has turned it up on end, so that it may protect him from the glare of the sun. The strange thing in his hand is his cocoa-nut pipe, which he is preparing to smoke.



“Oh, he'll beat us!” cried the excited child.”

HOW NETTIE WAS SACRIFICED.

NETTIE PRICE lay sick of a fever. Her skin was parched and burning, and her thin hands grasped a bedclothes tightly.

Nettie was a bright and beautiful child, though

only the daughter of a poor washerwoman, and very dear to her mother's heart.

“The fever will turn, I think, to-night, at twelve o'clock,” said Doctor Brown, as he went out. “Everything depends on her being kept quiet at that time—life or death.” Oh, what a quiet room! No sound

except the stifled sobs of the mother and the quick breathing of the delirious child.

'I do hope her father won't come in drunk,' whispered Mrs. Price to her anxious heart; and then she watched the sweet face, rocking herself to and fro, until the clock in the steeple struck twelve! 'Thank God, I hear the doctor's footsteps!' sighed she, as she saw a change coming over the face of her child, and the light of reason shining in the blue eyes.

Slowly, slowly, the footsteps ascended the rickety stairs. This time the ears of the mother were at fault. It was not the doctor, and, as the step neared the door, Nettie sprung up in bed, one hand pressed to her burning head and the other grasping her mother's dress, while her eager gaze was fixed on the door.

'Father's coming in drunk, mother, and he'll beat us! oh! he'll beat us!' cried the excited child, remembering but too well how many times he had done so.

When the door opened and her father reeled into the room poor Nettie screamed, and sank back insensible. The die was cast!

'She can never recover,' said Dr. Brown, an hour afterwards. 'This relapse is fatal! Oh! if her father could but realise what he has done—sent his angel-child out of the world, for she never will be conscious again here! Perfect quiet until her reason had been fully restored would have saved her.'

The heart-broken mother knelt at the foot of the humble bed until all was over with the child. No mortal eye but that of the good doctor took in the sadness of that scene, where a beautiful child was sacrificed on the altar of strong drink!

M. A. KIDDER.

TAS, A CLEVER DOG.

TAS, so-called from Tasmania, the land of her master's birth, is a beautiful collie, just over three years old. By some careful training she has been taught, not only to perform the ordinary tricks of a clever dog—such as to hold a piece of biscuit on her nose whilst the words, 'Ready, Present,' are given, and then dexterously to catch it at the word 'Fire'—but also to distinguish herself in other and more unusual ways. For example, Tas will tell you her master's birthplace. A piece of biscuit is thrown upon the ground, and you may name any town or country, without causing her to stir, but at the word 'Tasmania' she snaps up the biscuit in token of assent. In the same way she tells you that her own birthplace was Douglas, in the Isle of Man. Tas also has her own opinion as to the merits of various universities. On being asked through the medium of a biscuit which is the best university, she allows you to name Dublin, Durham, London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, or Oxford without a sign, but at the mention of Cambridge the biscuit is at once snapped up. When Tas is asked what she will do for the Queen, she stretches herself out and seems to die; but at the word 'The enemy is coming!' she leaps up and barks furiously. Through most of these experiments she behaves with the utmost gravity, but at times she relapses into a violent show of affection for her master.

A. R. B.



PETER'S REVENGE.

THE omnibus had just stopped before the grand entrance of the 'Hotel of the Roman Emperor;' the travellers, who had arrived by the mail train, were received by the head waiter in his black dress-coat, and by the porter in his smart livery.

The chief of the establishment himself had advanced as far as the threshold of the vestibule, and with many profound reverences was saluting a tall and distinguished-looking man, the Russian Prince K., who thanked him with a patronising nod.

The Prince, who was accompanied by his wife and daughter, had telegraphed his approaching arrival the day before, in order to secure the best apartments in the hotel.

The waiters eagerly hurried up to carry the trunks and the other baggage of the travellers to the rooms which were destined for them. A few minutes afterwards the omnibus returned to the station to wait for the next train.

The Prince of K., as the servants whispered to each other, was very proud. One could hear by the sound of his voice that he was accustomed to command; his short and haughty manner showed plainly enough that he would not bear any reply, and that to disobey his orders appeared to him a simple impossibility. Although serfdom had already been abolished in Russia (a fact which the Prince styled the saddest error of benevolent principles badly understood), he could not understand, in his aristocratic presumption, that a peasant in a coarse jacket was just as much a man as a Prince or an Emperor. By the force of an inveterate habit, he treated every man who had no blue blood in his veins in a manner which gave him clearly to understand that he regarded him as a very inferior sort of being to himself.

Prince K. was pale and thin. He wore a light beard on his long face with its strongly marked features; and his eyes sparkled beneath thick gray eyebrows.

The servants of the hotel, stimulated by the hope of a liberal gratuity, had made up their minds to submit calmly to the Prince's insolent manners; and Herr Stambach, the master of the hotel, had too much commercial sense not to note down each of his bows upon the Prince's bill. 'Pride must be paid for,' he said to himself.

The Princess had been in bad health for some years; her doctor had ordered her a prolonged residence either at Nice or Madeira. It had been resolved to try both, and the family was now travelling to the former. But in order to allow the Princess, who could not bear so long a journey without a halt, to rest a little, they remained some days at the hotel.

The Prince's daughter, a young lady of eighteen, and very beautiful, waited constantly on her mother, and did all in her power to alleviate her suffering by her tender solicitude. The Prince, who had little sentiment in his selfish nature, nevertheless had been sufficiently attentive to accompany his wife. It must be added, too, that it was by no means disagreeable

for him to leave for a time his cold and rigorous climate, to invigorate himself beneath the beautiful blue sky and bright sun of Nice, for his health was not of the best; but what most attracted him were the thousand amusements of that favourite place of residence.

At the end of three days the noble family left the hotel. With his most amiable air Herr Stambach wished them a pleasant journey. The Prince scarcely looked at him. Had he not paid his bill? and surely that was enough.

Three hours later, the following telegram was received at the hotel,—

‘My wife has forgotten some of her ornaments, consisting of a brooch set in diamonds, a gold necklace, and a pair of earrings in the form of a crescent. These jewels will be found in a little case in the upper drawer of the wardrobe. Send it immediately to the Post Office, Nice. On my return I will pay you for your trouble.’

‘PRINCE OF K.’

Stambach hastened to the apartment which the Princess had occupied, but the case could not be found in any of the drawers; he then searched through the whole room, and afterwards in the adjoining ones, but without discovering anything.

‘What a fatality,’ he exclaimed angrily, ‘that such a thing as this should have occurred in my house! My good reputation and my establishment would suffer if a thief were found among my servants.’

He ran into the porter’s lodge, where all the keys of the rooms occupied by travellers were hung up, ‘At what o’clock were the keys of Nos. 4, 5, and 6, occupied by the Russian family who left this morning, brought here?’ he asked of the porter.

‘About half an hour after the Prince’s departure. It was Peter who gave them to me.’

Stambach immediately summoned the man who had been mentioned.

Peter was a young fellow of about twenty, with strong broad shoulders; his broad and unpleasing face was surrounded by reddish hair, his forehead was narrow, and his eyes did not show much intelligence, but one could read in them a certain amount of good nature. He who saw Peter for the first time in his blue working jacket, with his horny hands, his muscular arms, and his bull-like neck, did not feel particularly attracted towards him; however, his master had hitherto been very much satisfied with him as regarded his industry and obedience, as well as his strict honesty.

Peter was of a frank and upright nature, though somewhat rough; he hated nothing so much as those servile and fawning manners which appear inherent to so many servants. Having lost both his parents early, he had been brought up in an Orphanage, and had at times shown a rather obstinate character; however, those who had learned to know him better willingly pardoned his faults in consideration of his natural kindness of disposition.

‘Did you clean the Prince’s rooms after his departure?’ Stambach inquired of the servant.

‘Yes.’

‘Did any one enter the apartments before you?’

‘No; I went in before the omnibus had started from the house.’

‘Has any one been in since you left them?’

‘No.’

The porter also asserted that the keys had not been asked for since.

‘The Prince has just telegraphed to me that the Princess forgot, and left here, a case containing some jewels,’ said Stambach to Peter; ‘do you know any thing about it?’

‘No, sir.’

‘Nevertheless, this case cannot be found,’ continued the master of the hotel severely; ‘be candid, and if you have thoughtlessly put aside this case, of the value of which you certainly are ignorant, confess it, and the affair will be arranged between us.’

As he said these words Stambach regarded the young man narrowly; but he manifested neither surprise nor embarrassment: he remained calm and tranquil. His redness alone and the swelling of his veins betrayed his indignation at the suspicion which had fallen upon him.

‘I have nothing to confess,’ he said; and his grey eyes were fixed with a proud firmness on those of his master; ‘if you consider me a thief, dismiss me.’

‘No, indeed, for I shall give you up to the police.’

‘That is all the same to me. I don’t know where this case is.’

‘Peter, reflect, and remember that all appearances are against you; hitherto, it is true, you have behaved honestly; but none other than you has entered that apartment, you remained there half-an-hour; justice will certainly condemn you.’

Peter’s features darkened, he clenched his hands, and between his closed lips repeated, ‘I am not a thief.’

‘Follow me upstairs, and assure yourself that the case is not there,’ said his master.

Peter shrugged his shoulders, and followed him in silence. While Stambach searched afresh in every corner of the apartment, Peter stood in the middle of the room, and regarded the fruitless endeavours of his master with as much indifference as if he were a complete stranger to all that was passing around him.

‘Young man, don’t you feel any interest in a matter which touches you so nearly?’ asked Stambach, angrily.

‘I have nothing whatever to do with this theft, Herr Stambach. If perchance I found this box now, you might think that I had hidden it, and had now produced it from fear of punishment.’

‘Well, Peter, if you have so little regard for yourself, at least have some for me. Don’t you see that the excellent character which my hotel enjoys will be lost when it is rumoured abroad that there are servants in my house who pilfer travellers?’

‘I see it perfectly, but I cannot change anything.’

The servant’s tranquillity exasperated the master; he was persuaded that Peter was the guilty party, and that his cool behaviour was only the clever hypocrisy of a consummate thief.

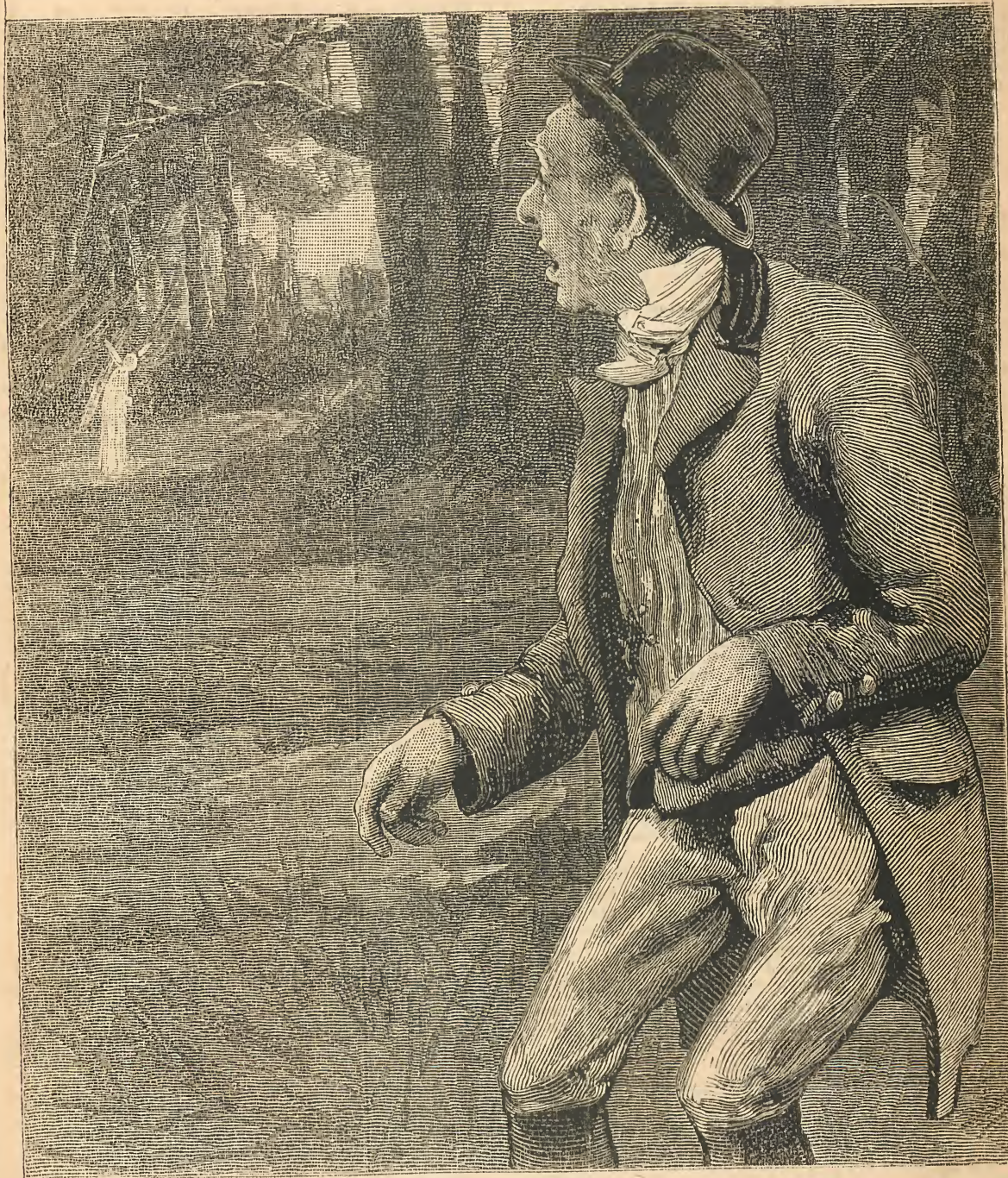
‘Before going to the police I wish to make a thorough search in your chamber.’

‘It will be a useless trouble, for you will only find my clothes there.’

(To be continued.)



Herr Stambach charging Peter with the Theft.



Old Hodge "seeing the Ghost."

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 139.)

CHAPTER XIX.



ACK and Davy came back rather crestfallen from their expedition, but not discouraged. Not a trace had they been able to find of those two brawny burglars described by Captain Nethercoat. Once they thought they were on the track, but, after a long chase, they had run to earth an old lame tinker and his donkey, who received them with bad lan-

guage and kicks, and neither of these, especially the man, seemed physically capable of such an artistic robbery as that at the Garth, whatever they might be morally.

But if they had been unsuccessful in the matter of burglars, they had done better as regards ghosts, for they had full and circumstantial evidence that the Flower ghost in the ravine had been seen the very night before. Old Hodges at the Lodge had seen him.

'It was bright moonlight, you know,' Davy said with much importance, for Martin condescended to appear interested in the story, while Jill hung breathlessly on every word, and Lance listened with a strange, startled face, and the three together made a most satisfactory audience for the teller of a ghost story, and might have led to the introduction of improvements on Davy's part if Jack had not been there to put in a spoke. 'It was bright moonlight, and old Hodges was coming home late from the "Green Man." It was Alice Hodges who told us about it, for old Hodges was bad in the head and grumpy, and said she was making a piece of work out of nothing. He'd had a drop, she said, but wasn't so to say drunk, and as he came along the top of the lane leading down into the ravine he saw something moving under the trees.'

'What was it?' in an awful whisper from Jill.

'Well, when he first came in, he told Alice it was a great, big man with fiery eyes, and horns like a cow, and with a great club on his shoulder that looked bright and shining.'

'Wasn't he frightened?'

'Rather!' said Jack. 'Alice said, when he first came in, he looked skeered to death, with his face as white as a sheet, and his legs shaking under him.'

'Did the ghost speak to him?'

'He didn't wait to hear, but just cut and run as fast as he could go.'

'I dare say he was screwed,' said Martin, 'and didn't see anything at all. Wretched, drunken old beggar!'

'Well, he says he will never go that way again as long as he lives; and Alice says she wishes that was the only way to the "Green Man," with all her heart. I say, Jill! I think you and me will go out ghost-stalking some night, or perhaps Martin can do

it while he's up at the Mottrams'. You ought to introduce Midas to the ghost; or—oh! I say, Martin, what a lark it would be for you to bring him down to the ravine one evening, and for me and Davy to rig up a ghost for him—phosphorescent paint and scooped-out turnips, and all the rest of it!'

'Shut up!' said Martin. 'I won't have any of those sort of larks.'

'Well,' Jack said, rather regretfully, 'I suppose it wouldn't quite do. He'd be in such a jolly funk, he might have a fit. Why, he's scared out of his wits, if he has any, when he's left in the dark, and jumps pretty nearly out of his skin if he hears a mouse squeak. And I'd do such a lovely ghost, enough to make a cat's blood run cold.'

'Couldn't we give old Hodges another turn?' suggested Davy, 'and scare him so that he'd never get tipsy any more, and sign the pledge, and live happy ever after?'

But Martin discouraged this violent sort of temperance work; and Jack, with much regret, gave up the idea of the ghost, and turned his mind again to the burglars, declaring his intention of going over to the Garth the first thing on the following morning.

'Oh, yes! it's all very well to say they are miles away by this time; so they may; but, as often as not, the fellows hide away the plunder somewhere near the scene of action, and come and unearth it when the matter has blown over a bit. Why, bless you! those jewels may be stowed away in the most unlikely place you can think of; down at the bottom of a duck-pond, or in a hay-rick, or under the pulpit cushion in church, or in Captain Nethercoat's sketch-book,' added Jack, with a sly look out of the corner of his eye at Lance.

'Hullo! clumsy! What a spill! and Sunday, too, and clean cloth! Give it him, Jill!' For Lance's tea had been upset all over the cloth.

Lance was in a strange, restless condition that evening, quite unlike his usual, easy-going cheerfulness. He did not seem able to sit still for two minutes together; but he would not go to church with the others; and Davy, who stayed at home also with his father, reported that Lance spent all the time locked up in his bedroom, and he thought he was writing, for he heard the scratch, scratch of a pen going on.

'You couldn't have heard that from father's room,' said Martin, severely.

'I heard it from the passage.'

'You were looking through the keyhole!'

'I wasn't.'

'Then you were listening at the crack. Now look here, Davy, if I ever catch you at these sort of tricks, I'll give you as jolly a thrashing as you ever had in your life.'

Next morning Jill was as busy as a bee, getting Martin's clothes packed to go up to Hill Park. It was really wonderful what havoc had taken place even in the few days of nurse's absence. What a hailstorm of buttons must have occurred! what sudden developments of fringes round collars and cuffs! and what heart-rending burns and tears and stains on cloth clothes! and this with Martin, too, who was generally so much more careful over his things than the other two! But by a judicious

selection of the most presentable articles of clothing from the three boys' wardrobes, a tolerable result was arrived at, and Jack and Davy volunteered to carry up the bag to Hill Park between them, before setting off on their detective expedition to the Garth.

This was very kind of them, Martin felt; but he was not sure that he should make a very dignified first appearance on the scene in his new character of tutor, with Jack and Davy up to all sorts of clown and pantaloen tricks over his bag; so he was much relieved when the dog-cart from Hill Park drove to fetch him and his bag together.

Just as he was leaving Lance came into the hall: he was looking heavy-eyed and pale, as if he had not slept much the night before: which, indeed, was the case. It was nearly ten, and Lance remembered Captain Nethercoat's words the evening before—'I shall expect you at ten,' and the words as they came back to Lance's mind had a tone of command, if not of menace, in them. But Martin set down his troubled, gloomy look to their quarrel, and, with a sudden feeling of compunction held out his hand.

'I say, Lance, shake hands and be friends.'

But Lance's hand returned Martin's warm grasp coldly and listlessly, and his face did not light up in response as it used to do, and Martin felt repelled; but he made another effort to set things right.

'We were jolly enough before that fellow Nethercoat came. There's something queer and fishy about him I'm sure, and I've told Jack and Davy not to have more to do with him than they can help, and Jill's not to go near him. Of course, you can do as you like; but, Lance, I wish you'd draw off a bit, and not be so awfully thick with him.'

Lance had gradually turned away as Martin spoke, and now stood with his back turned to him, looking out of the window, outside which the thoroughbred mare in the dog-cart was arching her glossy chestnut neck and pawing the ground, impatient to be off, and disdaining Jill's blandishments and the bread she was offering her. If only Martin had spoken like that yesterday, how gladly Lance would have responded and thrown over Captain Nethercoat, and clasped hands with Martin and told him all his distrust, which was a hundred times deeper even than Martin's could possibly be; but now it was too late.

'You said he was just the right sort of friend for me yesterday,' he said, 'and I think that's about it.'

'All right!' said Martin, in a huff; 'please yourself.'

But he turned back again, even when his foot was on the step of the dog-cart, to where Lance still stood at the hall window.

'Lance,' he said, 'Jill says Captain Nethercoat lent you some money the other day; if he's been dunning you for it, don't bother about it, but let us tell father and see if it can't be managed somehow. You see, I shall have my salary before so very long, and, perhaps, old Mottram wouldn't mind advancing some of it. Captain Nethercoat's just the sort of man I could fancy turning nasty if one owed him anything.'

But Lance only shook his head. It was not very

easy for him to speak, for there was a lump in his throat, and Martin's kindness made him feel inclined to burst out crying like a baby; and perhaps, if Jack had not been sliding down the banisters, and Davy shouting to Martin to look sharp, and the mare rearing up on her hind-legs, he might have done so.

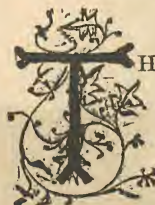
'It's that, isn't it?' asked Martin.

And then Lance cleared his throat with an effort. 'It's awfully good of you, Martin, but I—don't—owe anything to Captain Nethercoat.'

'But you did, Jill told me.'

'Yes, I did—but—it's—paid.' And then he turned away from the look of incredulous astonishment on Martin's face, and rushed upstairs and locked himself into his room, and did not come out till the dog-cart had driven away, and Jack and Davy had set off with very business-like backs to find the jewels and take the burglars at the Garth.

(To be continued.)



THE PEAR.

THE Wild Pear may be found in some English woods, although it is not a common tree in this country. Its white clusters of blossom are very lovely in the spring, but its fruit is not at all like that of the cultivated pear, being hard and harsh in taste. It is of little use, except as food for the birds.

With careful cultivation, however, the good qualities of the pear have been brought out, and it is certainly one of the most valuable trees in our orchards. The Romans knew its worth, and in the writings of Pliny we find many varieties of this fruit mentioned. He speaks of Falernian pears, which were highly esteemed; Tiberian pears, named after the Emperor Tiberius; and Proud pears, which, although they ripened early, decayed very quickly.

The English monks, who were such good gardeners, were not likely to neglect the pear, and the brothers at the Cistercian monastery at Wardon, in Bedfordshire, raised a baking variety, which is still grown in the West of England, and is known as the Wardon pear. The famous Wardon pies, which were served up in olden times at royal and other banquets, were made of this fruit, and not of venison, as some writers have supposed.

Three pears may be seen upon the arms of the city of Worcester, and were placed there because in Worcestershire the chief manufacture of perry, or pear-wine, is carried on. About twenty gallons of perry may be made from the fruit of a full-grown tree.

The pear-tree lives to a great age, and does not bear much fruit while it is young. Hence the old rhyme,—

'He who plants pears
Plants for his heirs.'

The wood of the pear is very finely grained, and was at one time used for making engravers' blocks. Box-wood is now used for this purpose. When dyed black, pear-wood closely resembles ebony, and is of value for making picture-frames, carved work, and a variety of small ornaments.

H. L. T.

PICTURE WITHOUT WORDS.



Rich !

PICTURE WITHOUT WORDS.



Poor!

A CURIOUS ANIMAL.

WHEN details first began to reach England of the birds and animals to be found in Australia, there came news of a remarkable creature, which had the body of an otter, the broad flat bill of a duck, spurs like those of a fighting-cock upon its legs, and which laid eggs. Was it bird or beast? The wise men at first said that it was neither, but only the result of some false reports or the statements of ignorant natives. By-and-by there came to England a stuffed specimen of the mullingong, for so they called it in Australia. But, even then, all were not convinced, but fancied they were being deceived by some skilful artist. However, the matter was soon settled beyond any doubt, for the disputed creature was found in plenty by the settlers. This point settled, the learned gave it a scientific name (*Ornithorynchus paradoxus*), the length of which was in proper proportion to the strangeness of its owner. It is, however, better known as the Platypus, or Broad-foot.

The habits of the animal seem to be nocturnal, or it is at least only seen at night, in the early morning, or, during very dull weather, in the day-time. It swims with great ease, and frequents the quiet pools in the interior of the country, or the rushy banks of large rivers near the sea. There it swims sometimes like the beaver, and at others with the whole body submerged, and only the upper part of the bill above water.

In the banks it makes for itself a long burrow, running up towards the surface, at the end of which is found the nest, about a foot in length by six inches in breadth, and strewn with grass and weeds. These burrows are often thirty feet, and have been found as much as fifty feet in length. The Australian natives take the Platypus for food, and have a particular liking for its young, which they capture by digging down upon the burrow.

A. R. B.



PETER'S REVENGE.

(Continued from page 143.)

WITHOUT saying another word, Stambach ascended the staircase which led to Peter's garret: his box, very soon searched through, only contained clothes and some linen, but no trace of the lost case.

'Shall I take my bed out and empty the mattress?' asked the young man, not without a shade of mockery in his tone.

'Yes; I wish to be quite certain.'

Peter flung the pillows on the ground, and while he tore the straw out of the mattress, he exclaimed, trembling with rage,—

'Well, since you have so little confidence in me, I give you warning immediately!'

The master of the hotel, when he had completed his search, made his declaration to the police. The commissary, who was a very cautious man, after making

investigations himself, which were equally useless, asked if the young man had left the hotel in the interval. The porter assured him that he had not.

'Has the lad any love affair with one of the female servants?'

Stambach could not give any information on this point, but he had never noticed anything of the kind. Peter, who, after his master's answer, had been able to guess the commissary's question, replied for himself.

'Make yourself easy on that score, the women find me too ugly; and, besides, I don't know how to flatter them.'

'It might be,' continued the commissary to Stambach, 'that the Prince has made a mistake, and that the case will subsequently be found after all among his wife's luggage. But if it is not so, the thief according to all appearances can be no other than your servant, who, besides, appears to me more cunning than would at first be imagined. I will search to-day through all the jewellers' shops in the town; nevertheless, I consider it necessary first to have a thorough investigation of all the rooms occupied by your servants.'

Stambach hastened to accompany him, but nothing was found.

'I must refer the matter to the magistrates,' said the commissary: 'but in any case I must first place your servant under arrest.'

Peter turned purple when he heard these words; he remained calm outwardly, but it could easily be perceived how he was inwardly struggling to master his rage, for his generally colourless eyes were now sparkling with a dark fire. For a moment one might have thought that he was about to throw himself upon his master; however, he knew how to control his feelings, and followed the commissary without any resistance, but not before he had remarked to Stambach,—

'You alone are the cause of my misfortune; you know that I am an honest man, and yet you have denounced me. Recollect this moment, and be sure that I will avenge myself.'

Vainly had the police used the greatest activity in their investigations, the case still could not be found.

The result was communicated to the Prince, who sent another telegram confirming the first. The precious casket had not turned up in any of his trunks, and the Princess affirmed that she remembered perfectly well having placed it in the drawer which she had previously indicated.

Very soon the whole town was occupied with nothing else but this robbery; the newspapers related all its details; none doubted but that the servant was the thief: it appeared evident that he had profited by the opportunity. Those, however, who knew him more intimately thought it strange that his candour could hide such cunning.

Questioned by the magistrate, Peter persisted in his first denial; but when he was quite certain of the incredulity of his judge, he only offered an obstinate silence to all his questions. This magistrate had grown old in the exercise of his functions; he was so convinced of the baseness and corruption of human nature, that out of a hundred accused brought before him he considered ninety-nine at least to be guilty.

In the course of his long career he had had to do with so many hypocrites and with so few honest and innocent persons, that tears and protestations had no value for him. Peter's guilt appeared to him such an evident fact, that he could not understand how he dared to deny it.

'You have not been punished hitherto,' he said, in a benevolent voice; 'a frank avowal would improve your position, while your obstinacy can only make it worse.'

'I know,' said Peter, 'that appearances are dead against me; but there must be a scapegoat, and an unfortunate servant is not worth taking any trouble about. Why so many words? Simply condemn me, and the matter will be finished. I shall not be the first who has been unjustly punished.'

'You appear to me to take the matter very lightly. Don't you know that a man who is sentenced for theft suffers the consequences of it for the remainder of his life?'

'Of course I do; but it matters little to me if the whole world think me a thief, provided that I know myself that it is not so. I care as little for other people's opinion as for your imprisonment. I am, and shall remain, a poor servant, to whom no one pays the least attention, notwithstanding his honesty and good conduct.'

'But should I admit that you are innocent, who then is the thief?'

'I don't know; but it appears to me that as the case cannot be found in the room, it is possible that it never entered the hotel, or that it was lost on the road.'

'But the Prince formally declared the contrary.'

'Undoubtedly more credence would be given to the word of a great nobleman than to that of a servant.'

'Do you think, then, that the Prince told an untruth?'

'No; but I think there is a mistake somewhere.'

The judge, not being able to get anything more out of Peter, gave up cross-questioning him any further. His detention and examination had now lasted two months nearly. The continual society of men accused of robbery or still greater crimes, the not very humane way in which he was treated by the gaolers, had unfavourably influenced Peter's character: he had become morose and taciturn, and this made the officials of the prison suspect him all the more.

At the commencement of his imprisonment he had loudly declared that he was innocent: but as it is a well-known fact that all criminals pretend that they are not guilty, his assertions were only laughed at, his companions in captivity themselves joined in mocking at him. When Peter saw himself thus despised and repulsed by every one, the society by which he was surrounded became more and more odious to him. The day of condemnation arrived at last; he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and to the loss of all his civic rights for the same number of years.

'Two years imprisonment! a thief!' murmured Peter, turning pale. Then he quietly allowed himself to be led back by the police.

Years had passed away since this occurrence. Peter had left the prison, furnished with a certificate witnessing to his good conduct; a small sum of money which he had earned by weaving was also given to him.

No one heard whither he had gone. It was supposed that he had left for America; and it was, in fact, the most likely thing to imagine, for what confidence could a man inspire who had been imprisoned two years for theft? Suspicion would follow him as closely as his shadow, whenever his past life was discovered.

Herr Stambach had sold his hotel on very advantageous terms, and had retired to a large farm he had purchased on the banks of the Rhine. He had almost forgotten all about the theft, and perhaps even the name of his former servant; if he spoke of him it was only to a select circle of friends, when he wished to prove how difficult it was to believe in honest faces.

Herr Stambach was far from suspecting that before long he would have reason to remember the thief of the diamonds.

The coachman of the hotel had left the house a short time after Peter's condemnation. He had set up a grocer's shop, which had developed very rapidly. Many people thought this was natural enough, as the coachman's wife had some property, and he was himself an active, enterprising man. But others shook their heads when this rapid fortune was spoken about before them, and thought that a prize in the lottery or a handsome legacy must have had something to do with it. Then suddenly matters assumed a very different aspect. The grocer fell ill, and in a few days his malady had made so great progress that the doctors gave up all hope of saving his life.

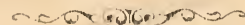
Upon his death-bed, and before witnesses, he then declared that he had stolen the Princess's jewels, and that Peter was innocent. The case had been left in the carriage, and he had only perceived it as he was returning back to the station. Afterwards, when the Prince's declaration and Peter's arrest had removed all suspicion from him, he started for a distant town, where he succeeded in selling the jewels to a Jew. But from that moment his conscience did not allow him an instant's repose. Peter's sad fate, condemned in his place, was unceasingly present to his memory; and as, through fear of punishment, he had not dared to confess the truth during his life, he at least wished not to die without having rendered justice and honour to an unfortunate man falsely accused and condemned. He died a few hours after this tardy confession.

So Peter was innocent! Notwithstanding the formal affirmation of the Prince, notwithstanding the amazing clear-sightedness of the magistrate, Peter was not a thief.

This unexpected news perhaps caused a greater sensation even than the robbery itself had done at the time. Poor Peter was pitied, and the conduct of the Russian family, whose false deposition had prevented the discovery of the real thief and thrown an honest man into prison, was severely blamed.

Unfortunately neither Stambach nor the tribunal of justice were in a position to let Peter know that his innocence had been recognised, for they could not learn what had become of him.

(To be continued.)





The Hotel Coachman selling the Stolen Jewels.



"Have you hurt yourself? How did you come here?"

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 147.)

CHAPTER XX.



HE doctor's orders about Mr. Flower being kept quiet were easily carried out that Monday morning, for Martin was up at Hill Park, Jack and Davy spent the whole day wandering about the scene of the robbery, and Lance went off to Captain Nethercoat at the mill.

Jill kept wondering how Martin was getting on, and if Joe would blurt out how much rather he would have had Lance's company, and, if so, how Martin would take it. Mr. and Mrs. Mottram were to leave, she knew, by the mid-day train, and after that Martin and Joe would be left to their own devices, and she could hardly imagine two people whose devices were more unlike one another's; but she certainly was not prepared for the appearance of Martin himself at four o'clock in the afternoon, with a white face and very tightly compressed lips, and eyes shining with suppressed wrath.

'Oh! I say, Jill, I've had such a row with Joe Mottram!'

'What! already, Martin? Whatever about?'

'Oh! I dare say it was my fault; and yet, I don't know, for I think I was right, and I want to ask father.'

'Oh, Martin, he's asleep! He's had such a nice quiet day, and Dr. Wilson said he was all the better for it already when he came.'

Martin paced up and down the shabby dining-room carpet in great perturbation.

'I'll just go up and see if he's asleep still,' he said.

'Oh, you needn't be afraid, I won't wake him, I'm not such a selfish brute as that,' as Jill started up on the spur of the moment to stop him; and Jill's anxious little fears were more than satisfied when she heard the very gentle opening of the door, and when, a few minutes later, she crept up after him, she found him standing quite quietly at the foot of the bed, watching his father's sleeping face, as if even that was a help to him in his perplexity.

'What is it, Martin?' she whispered; and he beckoned her to follow him downstairs, where their voices would not disturb their father.

'It's all that Captain Nethercoat, Jill,' he said. 'I wish to goodness he was at the bottom of the Red Sea. I got on first-rate this morning, and did not find Joe half as bad as I expected; and I think, after he'd once got over the notion that I was going to bite him, he didn't mind me altogether. The old Mottrams left by the twelve train, and we drove down with them to see them off, and came back quite jolly to lunch; and we'd planned to have a try with that pony this afternoon in some nice, soft, out-of-the-way part of the park, where no one would see, and we shouldn't break our heads if he did shy us off now and then, you see,' said Martin, with an irrepressible little twinkle in the corner of his eye, even in the

midst of all his anxiety. 'I thought Joe Mottram's head was thick enough to stand a good many tumbles.'

'Well?' said Jill.

'Well, I was just having a look round at the books in the library—and I say, Jill! there's such a jolly *Chaucer* with pictures—and Joe loafed off somewhere, and by-and-by, when I went out to see where he'd got to, there he was with Captain Nethercoat and a friend of his, showing them all about the place, and doing the civil no end.'

'Wasn't Lance there?'

'Yes, he was, but I don't think he liked it a bit. I can't make the fellow out, Jill; it seems to me he's afraid of Captain Nethercoat, he always looks at him before he says anything, and once he contradicted himself flat because the Captain disagreed with something he said, and he slunk about the place after them like a beaten hound.'

'Well?'

Jill could not quite see what harm had been done by Joe's civility to Captain Nethercoat.

'I expect I didn't seem best pleased to see them, for after the first, the Captain took no more notice of me than if I had been a stick, and turned his back and did not seem to hear when I said anything; and I'd half a mind to take myself off, but I wanted to see what they were after, and it didn't seem quite right to leave Joe to be made a fool of, without any one to see fair play; so I stuck to them, and Master Joe marched them all about the gardens and hot-houses, and then into the house to see the pictures.'

'But Joe doesn't know one picture from another!'

'No, of course he doesn't; but Captain Nethercoat talked twenty to the dozen about art and Italian painters with crackjaw names; I wonder he wasn't ashamed after the chromos. I wasn't sorry to have a good look over the place myself, for I'd never been properly round it, and it's a fine old place, Jill, and no mistake; but I began to wonder where Joe was going to take them next, up on to the roof or into the servants' bedrooms; and, upon my word, I think they seemed as much interested in the pantries as in the pictures, and admired the way the back stairs are placed as much as the old armour in the hall. I got tired of following them about after a bit and went into the library again; and when they came down, I found that my young lord had invited them all to dinner.'

'Oh, Martin, how disagreeable!'

'Oh, I could have put up with that all right, but I'm sure the Captain isn't at all a safe sort of man to get hold of a soft fellow like Joe, and he's got Lance somehow completely under his thumb, and he nearly got me; but, as long as the Mottrams are away, he shan't get Joe, if I can help it.'

'But are they coming to dinner?'

'No: that's just what Joe and I have had such a row about. As soon as ever they were out of the house, I told him that it couldn't be done at any price, and that he must sit down and write a note to send after them to say that while his father was away he could not ask any one to the house. He was in an awful rage about it. They'd been flattering him up no end, and I don't suppose he'd ever given an invitation in his life before, and he'd promised

them some particular sort of wine, and I don't know what all; but I said, if he didn't write what I said I'd telegraph to his father; and I stood over him till it was done. What a fist the fellow writes, to be sure! and what spelling! And then I sent it off to the mill, and he went sulking up to his room, and I came off down here to see what father would say to it.'

'Shall I tell him, Martin, when he wakes?'

'No, never mind; I feel pretty sure now that it was right. You see, just when I was in such a rage I was not sure that it was not more than half my dislike to Captain Nethercoat and his cad of a friend.'

'What was the friend like?'

'Oh, a low-looking fellow with a dark beard and an ugly scar on one side of his face.'

'A scar?'

'Yes, from his eyebrow, just there,' said Martin, laying his finger on his temple. 'It must have been an ugly cut, I wonder it did not kill him.'

'Had he a fustian coat, Martin, and a red handkerchief?'

'Oh, no! he was rather well got up he was: by way of being a gentleman, you know. Have you seen him?'

'No,' said Jill; 'but when you said he had a scar, I remembered a man I met in the ravine one day; but he was a poor man, and he hadn't a black beard, so it could not have been him.'

Mr. Flower was still sleeping when Martin very unwillingly set off on his return to Hill Park; and Jill having assured herself of this, put on her hat and walked with Martin as far as the ravine.

Poor old Mart! Since that night, when she had followed him out to the gate, and he had carried her back and bathed her wounded foot, he had seemed to turn to her as much as Jack did, and to talk to her sometimes as if she were much older and wiser than she was, and able really to counsel and advise; and, perplexing as this sometimes was to Jill's little head, it made her very proud and happy, and gave her a sort of motherly feeling, as if she would take this great, strong fellow, head and shoulders taller than herself, and miles beyond her in learning, under her little wing and protect him, and drive away annoyances and vexations; and this evening she went with him across the ravine to the place where the house came in sight, and stood watching him across the park, much as you see a village mother watching her little toddling Johnnie or Jennie up the road to school, with her heart going too. But then she remembered Jack and Davy coming in ravenous to tea, and father, perhaps, waking and wanting her, and she turned and ran down into the ravine, making a short cut through the fern, and jumping the brook at a narrow part.

What a slight action sometimes produces great results! Perhaps if Jill had kept to the more beaten track, she might not have noticed a low, faint sound among the bushes near the stream. Just for a minute the remembrance of the ghost seen by old Hodges occurred to her mind, with its fiery eyes and horns like a cow; but it was too broad daylight yet for any very serious spiritual fears; and the idea of some wounded animal being there, needing her help, would not let such a tender little heart as Jill's go by without taking any notice, so she stopped and hesitated.

Another low moan, and this time too distinctly a sound of human need or suffering to be mistaken, and Jill called in answer to it,—

'Who is it? What's the matter?'

There was no answer; but Jill fancied she saw a movement among the fern a few yards from where she stood, and made her way cautiously in that direction. She was afraid it might prove a wounded poacher, and the remembrance of the man with the scar on his face occurred to her again, and made her half inclined to run away and fetch help, before making further investigations; but another low, fluttering groan close at hand, drew her irresistibly on; and pushing back the intervening branches and brambles, she found a woman crouching there, with her face hidden in her arms, that were folded on her knees.

There was something familiar to Jill in the look of the figure and the long cloak, though it was torn with the brambles and stained with mud and clay; and, when the woman raised her face for a moment and looked up, Jill recognised her at once as the person who had spoken to her a few days ago, though it was ashy white, and a great red scratch across the cheek made the pallor more striking and ghastly.

She looked up at Jill's gentle little face, full of pity and concern, with dull, unheeding eyes, as she had done many a time before that day at some bright-eyed, inquisitive robin, or frisking, impertinent squirrel, and then dropped her head again wearily on to her arms.

'Are you ill? Have you hurt yourself? How did you come here?' Jill asked, but received no answer. But when she said, 'I will go and call some one to help,' the woman raised her head eagerly, and stretched out her hand and caught hold of Jill's frock and whispered, 'Don't!'

Jill was puzzled; the thin hand held her fast, and even if it had not, she could not have left her, evidently so ill and suffering, alone there in the ravine, with the night coming on, and the dew falling, and no one coming near.

'You have scratched your cheek,' Jill said; 'shall I go and dip my handkerchief in the stream to wash off the blood?'

The woman seemed to understand this, and gave a faint motion of assent, but let go of Jill's frock unwillingly.

'You won't call any one?' she said painfully.

'No,' said Jill; 'I'll only go to the stream and come back.'

And so she did; and the wet handkerchief seemed to revive the poor creature so far that she was able to sit up and twist up her hair, which had fallen in a great coil on her shoulder.

'Did you fall?' asked Jill.

'Yes, I was on the bank above and I saw —'

'Not the ghost?' said Jill.

'I hardly remember what it was,' the woman went on, passing her hand across her eyes feebly, as if she would clear away a veil or mist from before them; 'but I tried to get down into the bottom to see what it was he was burying.'

'Then it must have been the ghost,' thought Jill.

'And I slipped and fell and struck my head, and fainted, I suppose, for when I looked up again, the



The Mountaineer's Friend.

stars were out overhead, and my foot was twisted under me, and it was cold and still, and I thought I was going to die, and I did not mind.'

'But have you been here since yesterday?' Jill asked.

'It might have been years, it seems so long,' was the answer.

'But you're better now. Won't you try if you could get up? and I could help you. But oh, dear!' said Jill, despairingly, 'it's such a steep path up the bank, and there's the gap in the hedge, and there are two fields before we even come in sight of a cottage; and if you won't let me call any one, not even Jack, I don't think you could ever get there.'

'Never mind!' the woman said; 'you've a kind little heart, as your father always had. I shall do well enough here. Don't tell any one to-night, but to-morrow send them to look here. Don't come your-

self, little one; you looked frightened enough at finding a living woman, and I should not like you to be frightened. You kissed me, little Jill. God bless you for it. I have not felt so utterly outcast, so hopelessly beyond forgiveness since.'

(To be continued.)

THE MOUNTAINEER'S FRIEND.

WITHIN his little Alpine cot
 Old Claude, the mountaineer,
 Has lived through summers fiercely hot,
 Through winters so severe;
 And still through wind or blinding snow,
 Whatever might betide,
 The old man to his work would go
 From morn to eventide.



The Gipsy's Donkey.

The wild dove spread her timid wing
 And flew to other shade,
 When Claude his glittering axe would bring
 Within the forest glade;
 For then the pine-tree 'neath his stroke
 Fell crashing to the ground,
 Diffusing as its branches broke
 A fragrance all around.

When, wrapped in golden clouds, the sun
 Was sinking in the west,
 Then Claude, his daily labour done,
 Would hie him home to rest.
 And oh! how sweet that little home!
 Its simple joys, how dear!
 Jeannette would watch to see him come,
 And smile his voice to hear.

But, ah! Jeannette has gone away,
 In the cold grave she lies;
 And now, how sad each passing day,
 How dim with tears his eyes!
 But still one humble friend is left
 The woodman's life to cheer,
 Of sympathy not quite bereft
 While the old goat is near.

D. B.

THE GIPSY'S DONKEY.

ALL over the Continent, and in many parts of our own country during summer, the tent of the wandering gipsy may be seen, pitched upon some breezy common, or under the shade of a leafy tree. Who are those dark-skinned strangers, and where did they come from at first? It is thought by very many that India was the birthplace of those strange people, and that spreading from thence they reached Europe, where they appeared about 1122.

In England the most barbarous edicts were issued against them by Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth. In Scotland, also, they were treated with much severity in early times. Last century, however, many attempts were made to improve their condition and lead them to mix with the general population, but with little effect.

The chief characteristics of this people are the same everywhere. A tawny skin, long coal-black hair, large black eyes, with expressive features and a well-proportioned form. They are all fond of showy colours, and love to adorn themselves with every variety of trinket.

The English gipsies earn a precarious livelihood by the manufacture of wooden spoons, mouse-traps, and other small articles, and by doing all kinds of mending work, contented to live from one year to another in a comfortless tent, hating nothing so much as any fixed employment.

As a means of conveyance for their property and their infant children they often use the patient ass, whose strength and endurance, along with its ability to subsist and thrive on the poorest herbage, render this animal the gipsy's best friend.

M. K.

THE WEIGHT OF A CROWN.

IT is said that a certain king of Poland escaped from his followers whilst hunting, and did not return to his palace. After some days of anxiety he was found by his courtiers in the market of a neighbouring town, where he was hiring himself out as a porter. When their surprise at this discovery had gone off they expressed to him their regret at finding their king in such a condition. He is said to have replied thus:—'Gentlemen, the load which I quitted is far heavier than the one you see me here carry; the weightiest of these is but a straw compared to that world under which I laboured. I have slept more during these four nights than during all the rest of my reign. I now begin to be king of myself. Elect whom you choose; for me, who am so well, it were madness to return to a court.'

A. R. B.

AUTOMATA.

THE making of figures, which should by the aid of machinery imitate the actions of the creature they represent, has amused mankind from very early times. About four hundred years before Christ, Archytas of Tarentum is said to have made pigeons which could fly. He had many imitators, few of whom obtained anything like the success attributed to him. Many hundreds of years later, Albertus Magnus and Roger Bacon were said to have made, the one a porter who opened a door, and the other a head which could answer the usual questions then asked.

The making of automata was carried on with great success in France during the eighteenth century by the few persons who applied themselves to it. A certain M. Vaucanson triumphed over all other competitors by the making of a flute-player, who placed the instrument to his lips, moved the valves with his fingers, and so played regular tunes. Three years after this wonder, he produced what was thought a still greater one in the shape of a mechanical duck. This strange bird swam, dived, cleaned its feathers, and it is even said that, by the aid of a chemical preparation, it digested its food.

Later on M. Droz exhibited a figure which drew likenesses of public characters, a modern rival of which had been very popular in recent years. Mr. Faber, after many years of work and much disappointment, produced a figure which, by means of keys, uttered some simple words and sentences. An automaton chess-player was in great favour for some time; but it was eventually found that a Russian officer, famed for his skill at this game, was concealed inside the figure.

At the present day the making of automata has reached great perfection, and their performances are amongst the wonders of London.

A. R. B.

PETER'S REVENGE.

(Continued from page 151.)



O an extremely severe winter there had succeeded, almost without transition, very mild weather; and the thaw, having restored life to the brooks and rivers, these, roaring and boiling, rushed from the heights above into the valley, dragging along with them blocks of ice, with a crash like thunder, as if they likewise were rejoicing at having broken the chains of winter. The Rhine, too, had burst its thick coating of ice, but, not being able to contain the masses of water flowing into it from all sides, the majestic river had broken down its banks and overflowed, chasing before it icebergs, uprooted trees, and a quantity of debris of all kinds, carrying ruin into the valley.

Not far from the town of C., at a point where the Rhine describes a curve, Stambach's property was situated; the house stood between the river and the high road; it was a solid building, capable of sustaining for some time the shock of the waves.

That day Stambach had started very early for the

town, without any presentiment of the disaster which was approaching. He had promised to return in the evening. His wife, who was nervous and ailing, had remained at home with her only daughter, a child of about ten, and some workmen and servants, when suddenly, about eleven o'clock, they heard a heavy rumbling like that caused by a distant storm. It was the furious river which was spreading through the plain. Before the amazed inhabitants could take even the slightest precaution, the water had invaded the entire district, the waves covered the fields and meadows, dragging in their furious course trees, furniture, and cattle, and overthrowing all obstacles in their passage.

The river's banks had disappeared, here and there a tree or a tottering cottage might be seen rising above the water. Stambach's house was built on a slight eminence which appeared then like a little islet in the midst of a lake; but the waters were incessantly rising, the islet getting smaller and smaller, and the floods pressing more and more closely round it.

Frau Stambach saw with terror the catastrophe approaching; escape seemed impossible, for, as far as eye could reach, she saw nothing but an immense expanse of turbid, yellow water. Already the waves were licking up against the walls; the icebergs, crunching together every now and then, grazed the house, and the cellars were filled with water.

The unhappy woman had thrown herself upon her knees, and was imploring God not to abandon her in so great a danger. Her daughter sobbed as she hung upon her mother's neck. 'If my husband were only here!' said the poor woman. But what would his presence have served? What was one man alone before a power of giants? The feeling of her isolation at such a moment, with no one to take pity on her and her child, overwhelmed the unfortunate woman.

'Oh, God!' she exclaimed in her deep anguish, 'save my child, my Laura; let me die, but protect my child!'

'Must we die then, mother?' asked the girl, pale and trembling.

Her mother pressed her to her heart, as if she would dispute her dearest treasure with the waves, whose noise sounded in her ears like a funeral dirge. Moved, however, by an instinct of self-preservation, she ascended with Laura to the higher story, and approached a window. She was no longer in a condition either to think or to act reasonably; terror had paralysed her senses; all was for her a fearful scene of confusion; she only heard the waves dashing against the house; she knew that this watery grave was soon about to swallow them up.

Nevertheless, on the dry land far away hundreds of persons were standing, powerless in presence of the fearful catastrophe. They were, for the most part, the inhabitants of the district who had been able to escape from the flood, and people from the town who hastened thither to try to give some help.

The poor peasants, who had lost all their property, wrung their hands in despair: women wept and children sobbed, without understanding the extent of their misfortune. Besides their goods, many of these poor people had lost members of their families, and their cries were heartrending indeed.

In the midst of the crowd stood Stambach also, who had sought to return home at the first news of the flood; but he had arrived too late; an expanse of water 300 yards broad separated him from his family, and he could not find there any boat to carry him to the other side; and even had he found one, who then would have dared to risk so terrible a passage?

'My wife! my child!' he exclaimed in his deep distress. 'Who will help me? who will save you?'

No one replied: all gazed with compassion at this man, whose grief they understood but could not alleviate. Stambach's horse was impatiently pawing the ground at the foot of the tree to which he had tied it. Should he mount it and try to swim across the floods? But it would have been folly to attempt it; the horse would have been carried away by the torrent; and what would have been the use of reaching his house if he could not save his family?

The building, it is true, still stood; but might it not at any moment fall in and overwhelm its victims? Like a madman Stambach wandered along the river's bank; he stretched out his arms towards his family. In what a terrible position must his wife, who was always ailing, find herself now! and his only child, whom he loved tenderly! Only three hundred yards separated him from them, but there he must remain inactive.

'A thousand thalers to the man who will save my wife and child,' he exclaimed, looking around him.

The roar of the waves was the only response.

'The house is solid and will resist,' said an old peasant.

'The house will not stand for another hour,' replied Stambach, in despair.

He fell on his knees and murmured a fervent prayer. He scarcely knew what he was doing, for the thought of seeing those he loved most in the world perish before his eyes, without being able to render them the least succour, had driven him well-nigh mad.

But suddenly a dark form was seen in the distance approaching rapidly. Was it a cottage which the flood was carrying away? No; they soon saw that it was a large boat in which were several persons. It safely reached the shore, and the boatman jumped on to the bank, and dragging the boat after him with superhuman efforts, securely attached it with a chain to one of the trees by the road-side. The persons who were in it then breathed freely—they were saved.

'You have acted bravely indeed!' exclaimed the owner of the boat to his man, as he held out his hand to him. 'I shall never forget it.'

The boatman, quite exhausted, had thrown himself on the ground; his heart was heaving from his violent exertions, his face was bathed in perspiration. He wore a red guernsey, dark trowsers, and high water-proof boots; his cap had been blown away by the storm, and his red hair floated in the breeze. He appeared to be about thirty years old, and was of a middle height, but his broad shoulders, muscular arms, and thick neck, showed that he possessed extraordinary strength. A smile of satisfaction now played on his face, which was by no means an attractive one, and was half hidden by a red beard.

(Concluded in our next.)



"You have acted bravely indeed!"



Jill sobbing, a little heap, at Jack's feet.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 156.)

CHAPTER XXI.



JACK felt himself greatly aggrieved that evening: not only was tea more than an hour late, and when you have had no more dinner than you can carry in your pocket, and have been betrayed by an appetite that does not keep strict Greenwich time into eating it soon after eleven o'clock, this is by no means a trifle. Added to

this that Davy had the toothache, and Mary Anne a pain in her temper, and that father was on no account to be bothered, and that Lance was out, and Martin had been down in the afternoon and Jack could not find out why, and that Jill when at last she appeared was strange and unlike herself, with lips that trembled and eyes that filled with tears, and hands that shook so that she could scarcely hold the teapot, and was so absent-minded, too, and poured the tea into the sugar-basin and flooded the tablecloth with hot water.

Neither could she be roused to any interest in Jack's own adventures, or in his new theory that the jewels had been taken by one of the servants at Lord Carbrook's; and not contented with eating hardly anything herself at tea, she actually seemed to expect him to do the same, and looked quite grudgingly at his second helping, and gave him so little milk in his tea that it tasted exactly like senna. And then she bustled off directly after tea and never came back all the evening, only just calling out 'Good night' from the top of the stairs. So really Jack felt that he had a right to be cross; and as Davy was the same, having the additional excuse of toothache, and there was no third person to bear the brunt, the natural consequence was that they quarrelled after they went up to bed, and ghosts being the subject of discussion, Davy accused Jack of being afraid to go to the ravine in the dark, and Jack declared he was not, and there and then prepared to prove it by going off to the cottage, and bringing back the teapot as a proof of his prowess and disbelief in the fiery-eyed ghost old Hodges had described.

'Don't be such an ass!' said Davy, feeling safe, by reason of his bound-up face, from the personal retort from Jack which such a remark would naturally have provoked, which was taking a mean advantage, and he knew it.

'Wait till I come back with the teapot,' Jack said, grimly, looking about for some clothes; for he was more than half undressed, and a shirt alone was rather too light and airy a costume even for the society of ghosts.

But as ill-luck would have it, Mary Anne had carried off his trowsers for a little much-needed brushing; so Jack had to rummage in the drawers for other garments, and chanced on a suit of white cricketing flannel, and as he passed through the pitch-dark hall, stealing along on tip-toe, holding his

shoes in his hand, he caught up a wrap from the big chest where such things were kept, with the unusually prudent idea that he might find it chilly down in the ravine, and only discovered when he came out into the moonlight, that it was a large, white, knitted shawl belonging to Jill.

'Why! I shall look like a ghost myself,' Jack thought, 'all in white!'

It was not a difficult matter as we have seen to get out of Bengrove at night; but this was the first time Jack had ever done it alone, and when he was once outside in the perfect stillness, he stopped and put on his shoes very leisurely, with more than half a mind to go back and box Davy's ears as more than sufficient answer to his cheek about the ghost. If he had never said anything about fetching that teapot, he would not have gone; but he knew what a handle that teapot would be for Davy's chaff: why, he would hardly like to look a teapot in the face again, or venture to look at Davy at breakfast or tea again for a twelvemonth! No, it must be done now, and he would smash that jolly old teapot to atoms next morning as sure as a gun. And off he set as hard as he could go before any more recollections of fiery eyes and horns, and other little items mentioned by Hodges, could come into his mind, straight across the lawn and through the gate, and along the road and by the fields, and through the gap in the hedge, hardly stopping to draw breath.

He did not meet any one on the way, Bengrove was too much out of the town, and it was past ten, which is considered late in Shettle. The last field before he reached the ravine was full in the moonlight, a sheet of silver, and the contrast made the trees in the ravine look black as ink; but Jack plunged manfully into the shadows, and was very glad that Davy was not there to see the start he gave when a great soft owl sailed noiselessly out of a tree close to his head.

Luckily, by that short cut through the gap in the hedge he avoided the lane which was most closely associated with the ghost, and at the end of which Hodges had seen the apparition; and the steep footpath by which he reached the keeper's cottage was so familiar to him that he made his way down easily in the dark, and came out on the broad space in front of the cottage.

It was certainly chilly; the bushes were damp with the heavy dew, and everything felt cold and clammy when he touched it, and if he gave a little shiver just then, it certainly might very naturally have been from cold, as he assured himself that it was, and he huddled the big white shawl round his neck and shoulders; but there were strange lights and mysterious shadows and noises that were hard to explain, and Jack did not feel so severe in his judgment of Jill and Davy for the panic that brought them home in such a hurry that night. He did not care to look very often in the direction of the lane, which lay in deep shadow, and in which something always seemed to move when he turned his head away; but the front of the cottage was full in the light, and he went and tried the door. It was locked as usual, and the key was not in its usual hiding-place under the thatch, and he wondered what Jill or Davy had done with it; but if it was not forthcoming, he could

scramble in through the window as he had often done before.

But before doing this he went round to see if the key had been left in the shed at the back of the cottage, and as he passed the windows he looked in, for he fancied when he rattled the latch of the door that he heard a sound inside—no doubt the rats who abounded there. But he could see nothing of these long-tailed tenants; only once he was startled by a patch of moonlight on a wall, and another time gave a great start at the reflection in a window of himself all in white huddled up in the shawl.

But as he came round again from the back of the cottage he fancied he heard the latch of the door rattle again as it had done under his hand ten minutes before, and he stopped to listen.

Yes, certainly there was some one there, for the latch sounded again, and he heard footsteps coming round the house in his direction.

It is all very well to disbelieve in ghosts, but I am quite sure that Jack's heart gave a great hop, and then seemed to stand still; and as to the thoughts he and Jill used to have about interviewing the ghost and unearthing the family plate, if Jack could have been safely in bed just then with his head tucked under the clothes, all the wealth of the Indies might have been buried by ghosts and welcome; and if there had been any way of retreat open to him except the one by which the ghost was advancing upon him, I think he would have taken to his heels without a moment's hesitation and endured Davy's crowing gladly to the end of his life.

As it was, the only thing possible to be done was to stand where he was against the cottage wall and hope the ghost might not come round the corner; but, after a minute's delay by the kitchen window, the footsteps came on slowly and (if it had not been a ghost, one might have thought) rather timidly, and Jack, feeling that the awful moment had arrived, summoned up all that remained of his courage, which was not very much, and stepped forward saying, 'Hallo!' with as brave a voice as he could command.

But the next minute he said, 'Hallo!' again in a very different tone of voice, and had taken the ghost bodily (just think of that) in his arms; for at the sudden appearance of Jack round the corner, certainly very white both in clothes and face in the moonlight, that very nervous spirit gave a shrill cry of terror, and turning round began making off, but either caught its foot in the grass, or its very trembling limbs gave way under it, for it fell in a shuddering, sobbing, little heap at Jack's feet.

It was a long time before Jack could satisfy Jill, for Jill it was, that she was not in the clutches of some ghostly apparition, and persuaded her to open her eyes and see for herself that he had neither fiery eyes nor horns.

He had been too much startled himself to laugh at her fright, and, besides, he thought it was such a plucky thing for a girl to do, remembering that it was quite as much as his own courage had been capable of; and he could not imagine what could have made her do it, as there had been no one to dare her to it, and no horrid old teapot that she felt it was due to her honour to fetch. Moreover, she had nurse's big marketing-basket on one arm and a bundle quite as large on the

other, which she had hauled all the way from Bengrove and through the gap in the hedge and down the steep, woody path; and no wonder, after all this and her fright, that she was not good for any explanation, and could only sit with Jack's arm round her, sobbing convulsively; and Jack, after his first impatient questions, left her to quiet down a bit, only giving a friendly little pat, or a rough squeeze, or pulling the knitted shawl round both of them, all of which was very consoling to poor, little, trembling Jill.

(To be continued.)

THE FACTORY BOY.



It was a proud day for young Paul Ellerman when he first went to the factory as a worker. He was somewhat tired of school-life, and it seemed to him great promotion to wear a linen apron, work with some fifty other boys and men, and at the end of the week get wages of his own.

The very first day, however, he met with an experience which to a boy of thirteen was a severe trial. Scarcely had he begun to work, when some of the men beside him demanded that he should pay his footing; the meaning of which was that they expected him, as a new-comer, to provide a bottle of brandy, to be consumed by his fellow-workers in the factory.

Now Paul had been brought up by his grandfather in habits of the strictest temperance; therefore, when this demand was made upon him, he hesitated. . . . 'Drink is no good for any one,' he said; 'I will not spend money on any such wickedness.'

This speech was received with jeers and laughter; Paul was addressed as a young saint, who was too good for this wicked world; while all the lads gathered round, each with a mocking and insulting word, which Paul felt it very hard to bear.

He stood his ground for a while, but at last he yielded to his persecutors, and consented to go to the wine-store for the brandy.

On his way back, however, his heart felt ill at ease, and he resolved to run home and ask his grandfather's advice.

But Paul was scarcely prepared for the violence with which the old man snatched the bottle from his hands. 'Boy,' he said, 'you shall never be the means of leading your fellows into sin.' And he dashed the bottle to the ground, where it lay broken to atoms.

To account for old Franz Ellerman's agitation we must explain the circumstances of his family. He had had one only son, the father of young Paul, who, in his youth, had fallen a victim to intemperance. For years he had been a heart-break to his family, and at length, when Paul was a mere baby, the wretched man while reeling home one night had fallen into the river and been drowned.

Paul had never been told this tragic story; but now his grandfather thought it best to tell it to him, that he might take warning from his own father's terrible fate. The poor boy was deeply moved at the sad recital, and resolved that never under any



Paul and his Grandfather.

circumstances would he touch drink himself or offer it to others. But when a youth is at work among men and lads who are ready to intoxicate themselves whenever they have an opportunity, his good principles are terribly tried, as poor Paul soon found, when he returned to the factory without the bottle of brandy.

We need not describe how he was treated by his cruel comrades; it is sufficient to say that he had courage to keep to his resolve, neither to drink himself nor encourage others to do so.

He grew up a steady, well-principled man, the comfort of his grandfather in his old age, and a credit to his native town.

M. K.



THE FLOOD.

DEAR sister, I heard your faint cry
As, suddenly waking from sleep,
You feared you were left here to die
In the midst of those waters so deep.
But, dear little Anna, how could you forget
That Heinrich was near and would rescue you yet?

No parents are left to us here,
They dwell in the mansions above;
But Heinrich will care for you, dear,
And circle you round with his love.
Those terrible waters! they roar and they hiss:
Was ever a night so bewildering as this?

But though these wild waters be deep,
And deeper each moment they grow,
My own little sister I'll keep
From the grasp of so deadly a foe.
Yes! still I may wade through the cold rushing tide;
I'll save my dear Anna, or die by her side.

D. B.

SCRAPS OF BIOGRAPHY.

BUTLER, the author of *Hudibras*, was no less noted for his pride than his poverty. A friend, who knew well the poet's circumstances, invited him one evening to supper, and contrived to place in his pocket a purse of one hundred guineas. When morning came the money was discovered by Butler, who felt much uneasiness at the incident. Finding by whom the purse had been placed in his pocket, he returned it, expressing his displeasure at what seemed to him an insult, although well meant.

WHEN Charles Mathews, the elder, was lying upon his death-bed, a friend, intending to give him a dose of medicine, handed him by accident some ink from a small phial. On discovering, when too late, the mischief, he said, 'Good heavens, Mathews, I have given you a dose of ink!'

'Never—never mind, my boy,' was the faint reply, 'I'll swallow a bit of blotting-paper.'

WHEN Orme, the historian, was at Madras, there was working under him a Mr. Davidson. Whilst they were at breakfast one morning, Orme asked the latter of what profession his father was.

'My father was a saddler,' was the reply.

'And pray,' continued Orme, 'why did he not make you a saddler?'

'Because,' said Davidson, 'I was always whimsical, and preferred to try my fortune in the East Indies, as you have done. But pray, sir, what was your father's profession?'

'He was a gentleman,' was the short reply.

'And why,' asked the other with great simplicity, 'did he not breed you up as a gentleman?'

SIR ASTLEY COOPER, the famous surgeon, enjoyed for many years an income of over 15,000*l.* For one successful operation on a West Indian merchant he received the sum of 1000*l.* Yet this large income was not attained all at once. In his first year of practice he received only five guineas; in his second, twenty-six; in the third, thirty-four; and so on, until in the ninth year it reached the sum of a thousand pounds.

LAUD in his *Diary* states, that one day, whilst he was standing near Prince Charles, afterwards King Charles I., the Prince said that if he had been compelled to choose a profession in life, he could not have been a lawyer; 'for,' said he, 'I can neither defend a bad cause, nor yield in a good one.'

A. R. B.

A BUDGET OF BALLOON ACCIDENTS.

THE year 1785 was remarkable for the many balloon voyages made or attempted, both in England and on the Continent. Amongst the foreigners who made ascents were Lunardi, an

Italian, who was the most successful; and Pilatre de Rosier, who went up with a friend in a Montgolfier. The latter had not ascended long before their balloon took fire. The voyagers fell from an immense height, and were killed. In England a Mr. Arnold went up from St. George's Fields, and fell into the Thames; Major Money ascended from Norwich, but he fell into the North Sea, and was only just rescued by a revenue cutter: whilst a Mr. Jeffries, and a Frenchman named Blanchard, crossed from Dover Castle to Calais, but only made the land with great difficulty.

Nearly a hundred years have passed since these events; but balloon voyages seem scarcely less dangerous than in those days.

A. R. B.

PETER'S REVENGE.

(Concluded from page 159.)



TAMBACH had hailed the boat as an angel of deliverance. He immediately addressed its owner, imploring him to let him have it, that he might go to the help of his family.

'Willingly,' he replied; 'but your undertaking is sure to fail.'

'Despair will double my strength.'

'It is almost impossible that you should reach the house; the boat will be carried away by the floods, or dashed to pieces against the icebergs. More skill than strength is needful here.'

'But can I not try? Must I see my wife and child perish miserably before my eyes?'

'If there is any one who could run the risk with a chance of success it is my sailor yonder,—ask him.'

When Stambach had made his request to him he rose up quickly.

'In that house down there are my wife and daughter,' he exclaimed imploringly. 'Oh, help me! save them!'

The sailor for a moment scanned the despairing man, who stood before him; then drawing back a step, he said,

'I cannot, Herr Stambach.'

'You know me, then?' said the former hotel-keeper with astonishment.

'I only know you too well. My name is Peter: I was formerly in your service, and you were the cause of my suffering two years' imprisonment.'

Stambach was confounded. However, he seized the sailor's hand, exclaiming,—

'Peter, have pity on me; forgive me; your innocence has been acknowledged! Save my wife and child!'

'Had you any pity on me formerly? My innocence is acknowledged, then, is it?' he said coldly, as he turned away.

'Ask any sum you like —'

'I don't want your money.'

'Then have pity upon my sick wife and on my innocent child; must they die because I have been unjust towards you?'

'No, that shall not be,' said Peter: 'I will at least make an attempt: little Laura must not die.'

He unfastened the chain by which the boat was attached to the tree.

'On this side,' he said, speaking to himself, 'it is impossible, the current is too strong.'

He drew the boat to the side where he hoped to reach the house without being carried away.

Stambach followed him and offered him his aid.

'I cannot make use of you, you would only embarrass me; but make haste and go down yonder, where the road takes a turn, and where the force of the flood is broken somewhat; there I hope to land, if I succeed in getting the boat thither.'

'You are a brave and worthy man —'

'Silence, Herr Stambach! I do not want your praises or your thanks.'

'How I regret, Peter —'

'Your repentance is nothing to me, understand. While they were taking me to prison I swore to avenge myself on you; well, I am taking my revenge to-day.'

A second afterwards the boat had started with the swiftness of an arrow.

With a sad despair Stambach followed it with his eyes. Then he posted himself at the spot which Peter had pointed out. He, indeed, had not deluded himself as to the peril of his attempt; he feared the icebergs, which he could skilfully avoid, and which the solid boat was able to resist, less than the current, which always strove to drag him towards the shore.

The sailor's experienced glance had immediately fathomed the situation; summoning up all his strength, he sometimes used the pole, sometimes the oar. The perspiration poured down his face; the strong muscles of his arms were so stretched that they seemed as if they would break.

The crowd assembled on the shore anxiously watched the movements of the boat. After much toil, Peter had got the boat into the favourable current for which he was watching. His pole was broken, but the boat bounded on under the vigorous strokes of the oar, and soon it had reached the house. The building was already half submerged. Peter had thrown aside his oar, his body half out of the boat, and his arms extended. He had succeeded in firmly grasping the sill of an open window; to break the glass and fix the chain of the boat round the framework was the work of a second.

'Madame Stambach! Laura!' he exclaimed; but he received no answer.

'They cannot be dead yet, I hope,' he said to himself, as he climbed in at the window. The room was empty, but from a neighbouring apartment he thought he heard the sobs of a child. He rushed in anxiously. Frau Stambach was stretched on the ground in a fainting fit, and Laura, pale with terror, was sobbing by her mother's side. She uttered a cry of fright on seeing Peter enter so suddenly.

'Fear nothing, Laurette, I am come to fetch away you and your mother.'

The brave sailor first took Frau Stambach in his arms, and carried her to the boat, which took up some time, and required great care, for the sick woman's fainting fit increased the difficulties of the

rescue. The child quickly followed, and trembling all over, was placed by her mother's side.

'Keep up your courage, Laurette, I am going to take you to your father.' The maid-servants followed.

Peter unfastened the chain, and the boat carried along for some time seemed to be the plaything of the floods.

When the child saw herself surrounded by these roaring waves, she began to cry, clinging more tightly than ever to the arm of her mother, who had now come to herself. Suddenly the waves opened, throwing up towards the sky a boiling foam, and when Peter turned round the house had disappeared; a whitish circle only indicated the spot where it had been swallowed up.

'It was quite time,' murmured the sailor.

He succeeded at last, after prodigious efforts of skill and strength, in giving the boat an impetus which enabled him to reach the shore at the spot where Stambach awaited it.

Frantic applause saluted the heroic sailor on his arrival; twenty arms were stretched out to receive the child. Peter himself carried the poor lady, who had now regained her senses, and looked with astonishment around her upon the road. Stambach was beaming with joy; he pressed his wife to his heart, and covered his child with kisses.

'Where is brave Peter?'

'Down there! down there!' exclaimed the spectators, the eyes of most of whom were moist with tears.

The sailor had moved away. Overcome with fatigue, he was wiping away the perspiration which rolled down his face. The happy father went up to him, seized his hands, exclaiming, 'Oh, noblest of men! how can I ever pay you what I owe you, or clear myself with respect to you? Was this your vengeance?'

Peter quickly withdrew his hands. 'I don't want any of your gratitude, Herr Stambach; go away.'

'Pardon me, at least.'

'I am avenged, that is enough. What do you want more of a criminal, of a robber?'

'I have already told you that your innocence has been acknowledged.'

'That is all the better,' and Peter again went away.

'Strange man!' said Stambach. 'What an excellent heart under a rough exterior!'

He went to inquire of the master of the boat, who told him that Peter had served at sea for several years, and that he had only engaged himself in his service a few months ago. He described him as the best and most faithful of his boatmen.

All Stambach's efforts to testify his gratitude to Peter failed before his firm resolution to accept nothing.

'I will not suffer them to pay me for my revenge,' he said; 'it has been only too sweet.'

'Very well,' said Stambach; 'but the Prince must know that the poor servant is worth more than all of us.'

The Prince, having been informed of this noble action, hastened to obtain the cross of merit for Peter, and afterwards he appointed him steward of one of his vast estates in Russia.

J. F. C.



Peter going to rescue Stambach's Wife and Children.



The shining heap of Silver poured out.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 163.)

CHAPTER XXII.



YOU see, Jack, I couldn't leave her here, could I? She seemed so ill and bad; and that was why I was so late for tea, for it seemed as if she would hardly ever get so far as the cottage; and she had to sit down ever so many times to rest before she could go on again: but she wouldn't let me go to call any one. Oh, Jack! I hope she won't be angry at my having told you. I couldn't help it, could I? 'Well?'

'I got her here at last, and I heaped up the fern we cut last month and made her as comfortable as I could, and she said she was better and all right for the night; but oh, Jack! I couldn't go home and have tea and go to bed just the same as if she wasn't there, so I put some things in the basket and took the blanket off my bed, and I came,' said Jill, with a little shiver. 'I shouldn't have minded it if I might have told you; but I'm such a horrid coward, you know, Jack, and I couldn't help thinking of that ghost.'

'I don't think you're a bit of a coward,' said Jack; 'but why didn't you go in?'

'She said she would lock the door inside, and that in the morning I was to come round to the window behind, for she's in the back-room. But it's so quiet, Jack, I think she must be asleep, or she would have heard us.'

It must have been sound sleep, for no answer was made to the tapping on the window and vigorous shaking of the door that then ensued; and at last Jack proposed that he should get in at the window and see what had become of her; and in a minute he came back to say that she was gone and the house quite empty.

Jill could hardly believe it possible. The woman had been so feeble and exhausted when she left her, that it seemed incredible that she could have found strength to go off without help or support; and she made Jack go back to search again, before she would be satisfied that the bird had flown.

'Well, now,' said Jack, as he crawled back out of the window, 'I suppose the best thing we can do is to cut back home as fast as we can; but, by Jove! I'll take the old teapot to crack Davy's head with, see if I don't! I say, Jill, I shan't be sorry to get into bed, shall you? and I shan't be in a hurry to get up to-morrow morning.'

But Jill's mind was disturbed with anxiety about the poor woman, and she could not look forward with such unmingled pleasure to home and bed as Jack could; but still it was plain there was no good in stopping about there, and she was not sorry to follow Jack's lead up the path again.

But the prospect of bed was not so near as they imagined; indeed, neither Jack's pillow nor Jill's was pressed by its owner's head that night, for after they had passed the gap in the hedge and were out

in the moonlight, a figure started suddenly out of the shadow of the trees close by and called to them—'For pity's sake, help!'

It was the woman that Jill had helped into the cottage; but now it was not for herself that help was needed, but for some one lying still and motionless in the shadow; some one to whom the woman returned eagerly after calling the two passers-by, and lifted the head gently into her lap, stroking the hair back from the forehead, chafing the limp, unresponsive hands, and crooning over him with all manner of soft, endearing words, such as a mother might use to the baby at her breast.

'Who is it?'

'What has happened?'

'How did you come here?'

'God sent me,' the woman answered. 'I was praying, praying down there that I might see him just once more before I died, my boy, my little baby, whose life I blighted with a mother's shame; and I felt I couldn't breathe there, and something made me come, gave me strength to come up here just in time. Lance—'

'Lance? Not our Lance?'

'Yes; he was lying there near the hole in the hedge on his face, and I nearly stumbled over him in the dark.'

'Did he fall?'

'I don't know; his head is hurt in some way, and I thought he was dead; but I can feel his heart beat, and he spoke once.'

'What did he say?'

'He called out "Martin! Martin! I must tell him!" I can't see how he could have struck his head.'

'Were you here when I came by before?' Jack asked.

'Yes, but I did not like to call to you. I could not make out what you were, all in white; and Jill slipped past, too, so quickly that she might have been a ghost or a fancy. And, do you know, the woman went on with a strange manner, that had almost a tone of exultation in it, 'when I found who it was, it seemed enough just to hold him in my arms, all by myself, away from all the cruel world?'

'However did he come here?' said Jack. 'I thought he was in bed. And what's to be done now? I say, Lance! hold up, old chap!'

Jill had some matches in her basket and an end of candle, and, with the help of these, they examined Lance, and found a wound on one side of his head which had stunned him, and which must have been caused either by his falling against something or by a blow.

'Had I better cut away and fetch a doctor?' said Jack, after various ineffectual efforts to rouse him, and make the black lashes stir on the ashen cheek; 'or shall we try and carry him home? It's a precious, long way,' he went on reflectively, 'and Lance has such jolly, long legs, and neither you or Jill are much up to the job.'

'Look here!' the woman said eagerly; 'the cottage in the wood is the nearest, isn't it? Couldn't we get him there? and I could bathe the wound and bandage it while you fetch the doctor. If I may only have him there!' she pleaded piteously, as if

Jack were a person of vast experience and decided views, instead of a sorely puzzled and frightened school-boy. 'If anything can bring him back to life, I'll do it; and I'm not so weak as you think; I could carry him myself.'

There was a feverish, unnatural energy about the woman, and this, indeed, seemed to give her the strength which had been altogether wanting that afternoon when Jill helped her slow and painful steps to the cottage; and she and Jack raised Lance and carried him down the path and into the cottage, and laid him on the bed of fern that Jill had heaped up in the afternoon.

And now Jill's blanket came in very usefully, and with its help a not uncomfortable bed was made for Lance; and the woman, with wonderful tenderness and skill, bathed the wound and bound it up; and as she did so, Lance opened his eyes and looked straight up into hers with a strange, inquiring glance, that seemed to find an answer, for the lashes fell again in apparent content, and the head turned as if the arm that supported it were its natural resting-place.

But, meanwhile, the little end of candle that Jill had brought was every minute growing less, and Jack's attempts to light a fire in the rusty little grate proved entirely ineffectual. It is one thing lighting a gipsy fire in the daytime, when a plentiful supply of dry wood has been collected and some thoughtful person has provided paper, but it is quite another attempting it at midnight, when everything is damp and clammy, and even the matches spit and sputter and die out, instead of doing their part in the work of conflagration.

'Bother it all!' he said at last, flinging down the match-box. 'I'd better be off as fast as I can home and fetch some dry wood and a candle, and some brandy or something. And, perhaps, while I'm about it, I'd better tell old Wilson to come, or bring him along with me, for he won't be here for ever so long if he goes round the other way. You really think he's better?' he said, bending over Lance as he lay with his head in the woman's lap; 'he looks awfully bad.'

'Yes, he's better; but you must bring the doctor, though he'll take him away from me. If only I might keep him here and nurse him just for a day or two, I'd be content to go away then and die, for I should have done something for my boy.'

Her voice was so low that Jack could scarcely hear what she said; but he did not stop to ask more, but stripped off his coat and tossed it to Jill, whose face looked nearly as white and ghastly as Lance's, or the face that bent over him; and she gave a little involuntary shiver, for her feet and clothes were wet with the dew, and the night was cold and damp.

'Here! lay hold of my coat,' he said, 'and the shawl, and wrap it round you, and draw up your feet and sit on them, and I'll be back before you can say Jack Robinson, and before the candle goes out, and we'll have a jolly fire in no time.'

And off he whirled before Jill could gasp out any remonstrance, or make him take back his coat. But as to his being back before the candle was out, he would have had to be quick to have done that, for the draught that his rapid exit made caused the

flame to leap up and then die out with a sputter, and they were left in the dark.

Jill's first impulse was to run after Jack, but the woman's voice stopped her, and she groped her way to her and crouched down at her side.

'Don't be frightened, little Jill,' the woman said; 'it won't seem so dark in a minute, and he won't be long.'

'Oh, no! Jack's never long; he's so quick, so wonderfully quick always; he can beat all the other boys at school at running. He'll be back very soon, you'll be quite surprised how soon; it won't seem any time before he's back.' Jill went on talking more to quiet the terrors that stole up one after another to try her stout, little heart, than to her companion, who only answered with indistinct murmurs. And it was also really to herself that Jill explained that a noise in the next room was rats, and that a strange, fretful call outside was an owl.

It was a comfort to hear her own voice; and as she found that anything about Lance seemed to excite more interest in her listener than any other subject, she told all that she could think of that was pleasant about him, of his singing, and the game of hide-and-seek they had had, and how every one liked him at the Mottram's. But this subject was soon exhausted, as she did not like to tell of the anxiety and trouble that Lance had caused them, and that far more fruitful subject, the excellencies of Jack and Martin and Davy, did not seem so interesting; so, after a bit, this very one-sided conversation died into silence, and Jill sat listening and wondering how far Jack had got, and how soon she might reasonably expect him to be back, and going over every inch of the way with him; and yet, after all, it was her companion who first heard a sound, and touched Jill's arm, saying, 'Hush!'

'Here he comes!' Jill exclaimed joyfully, springing up. 'How wonderfully quick he has been! He must have flown! Didn't I tell you how quick he would be?' And she made her way into the next room, ready to open the door for him, but stopped to reconnoitre through the window and listened, for to her puzzled ear the sound did not seem to come from the right direction.

Surely he must have come the shorter way, as he had been so quick, and yet the sound seemed to be from the other side. The moon had sunk out of sight behind the trees by this time, and only a bar of silver between the tree trunks showed that it had not set altogether. But as Jill stood there with the disappointing conviction that it was not Jack after all, but only some night bird or animal moving in the brushwood, she saw a dark figure pass across that bar of moonlight, and then another, and, through the silence, she could hear the cracking of dry twigs and the crushing back of branches, as if some one were coming down through the underwood on the opposite side of the ravine.

It was certainly not Jack, and it sounded far too substantial for ghosts, and Jill said to herself 'Keepers!' and wondered if they had seen the light in the window and had come to investigate, and hoped that they would not be in a hurry to shoot, or to think that she and that poor woman were poachers.



Jack and Jill out in the Moonlight.

The two figures did not come into the moonlight again, and presently the sounds died away, and Jill, much relieved, concluded that they were on their rounds and were going lower down into the wood; but all at once her heart gave a jump, and then seemed to stop altogether, for she heard a voice nearly close outside the cottage saying, 'Here, set it down and look sharp!' and the next minute a man stood in front of her, so close that, if the window had been open, she might have touched him, his outline dimly discernible against the sky.

He had a sack over his shoulder, which seemed to be of considerable weight, and as he set it down there was a strange, clinking, clashing sound from within, which brought back suddenly to the listener's mind the story of the old steward and the buried plate. He was so close to Jill that when he turned and took off his cap and wiped his forehead, with his face turned directly to the cottage, she thought she must be seen, and shrank back from the window; but though she could see every movement of the man, she was better hidden than she thought, and the man



Arab Bird-starver.

had evidently not the slightest suspicion of the possibility of any one being inside the old ruinous cottage, for he left the sack there while he went back to meet another man, also laden in the same way.

They then went round to the side of the cottage, dragging the sacks with them, and Jill stole to the little side-window to see what they were about. They were removing some fagots that were leaning against the steep bank at the side of the cottage, and Jill stood peering at them through the darkness, hardly daring to breathe for fear of betraying her presence. What could they be about? and what if Jack should come back while they were there? Oh! if she could only warn him! but she could not get out of the cottage without being seen, and at the least noise the men stopped and listened.

They worked away mostly in silence, and Jill could hear their heavy breathing and a word now and then. They were evidently in great haste, for they did not pause for a moment till all the wood was moved, and then they began to dig out a hole under the bank where the fagots had stood. What was the hole for? The sound of the steady digging, and the fall of the clods, was too suggestive of the old sexton's work in the churchyard not to send a thrill through the hearer with the thought that a grave was being dug, and this idea did not make her any the less anxious to avoid detection; but in her efforts to keep perfectly still, her elbow slipped on the window-ledge with a grating noise, and both men stopped in their digging, and Jill turned sick and cold as if she could feel their eyes piercing the darkness.

But after a minute's listening they went on with their digging, and Jill was afraid to blink an eyelid or swallow, lest they should hear her. They spoke once or twice, but in low tones, and Jill could not hear what they said. The grave was not apparently to be very deep, for the spades were soon thrown aside, and then Jill heard a match struck, and the light of a bull's-eye lantern flashed right in at the window and across her eyes, but the next minute it fell full on the face of one of the men as he bent over the sack and photographed it distinctly on Jill's mind.

Surely! surely! she had seen that face before, with the scar on the temple running under the ear! They were lifting the sack into the hole, and again there was the clinking noise, and as they raised it the sack slipped from the hand of one of them and its mouth came untied, and in the light of the bull's-eye lantern Jill saw a shining heap of silver pour out on the newly-turned earth, salvers and spoons, cups and bowls, and forks.

The men uttered an oath, and began gathering up the silver in haste and throwing it back into the sack, and Jill would have rubbed her eyes if she had dared, so unbelievable did it seem to her. Could it possibly be the ghost after all? Was the old steward acting over again the deed of two centuries ago, to show where the silver was hidden to the descendant of his old master? But in all her experience of ghost stories, Jill had never come across one that told of a ghost with a dark lantern and a billycock hat, and a respectable family ghost,

of the period of Charles I., would hardly rap out such a very modern and vulgar oath as this had done.

Certainly there was nothing ghostly about this, much more like regular flesh-and-blood burglars, perhaps the very same who had taken Lady Carbrook's jewels. Where could they have taken all this silver? and why had they brought it there to hide? What had she better do?

Oh, if Jack were only there! Oh, if Jack would only keep away! What would happen if he came bouncing down the path right on to the men? It made her sick and giddy even to think of it, and she could not bear to go on watching the men, as they carefully shovelled back the earth over the sacks and replaced the fagots. Any moment now Jack might come, and in her wild terror she seemed over and over again to hear the sound of his approach. She quite forgot her two companions in the other room, where perfect silence reigned, and where not a word or movement reminded her of their presence, and she crept back to the door and waited with one hand on the latch, ready in a moment to run out if she heard him coming, if not to save him, at any rate to share whatever might befall him.

(To be continued.)

ARAB BIRD-STARVER.

THE sparrows and starlings in Arabia are the most audacious of little feathered robbers. As for scarecrows, they would just perch on them and enjoy the fun. The Arab husbandmen do not put the seed deep into the earth, but only scratch it in at the top, and the birds seem to think this is done on purpose to please them. So the farmers send poor men, like this one in the picture, over the fields to drive the birds away. It is hard work: he sings and shouts, and flicks a long cane about in all directions, from day-break till dusk. Only in the very hottest hour of the day he creeps into his little hut of branches and sleeps; and here, too, he sleeps at night. That little tin kettle by his side serves him to cook in; and in that, too, he mixes the dough every morning for his coarse bread—little flat cakes, which he roasts in the hot ashes of a little fire of sticks. The basket that hangs beside the kettle holds all he has in the world—a little flour, a few dates, and a little coffee, perhaps. His hat, now slung on his back, he puts on when out in the sun—it is as good as an umbrella; and his cloak, called a 'burnoose,'—well, it was a very good one once, when his great-great-grandfather bought it; and now, though you cannot see what the cloak was like for rags and patches, the poor old fellow is proud of it, and will wear it till the last thread drops off him.

There is one thing in which this poor man sets us a good example, and that is his attention to his religion. He is a Mohammedan, and is bound to pray five times every day; first, at dawn of day; and last, when the earliest star rises in the evening sky. At such times he takes off his old cloak, and spreading it on the ground wherever he is, he kneels on it and repeats his prayers; and though he has nothing but the sun to tell him the time, he seldom mistakes or forgets.

HOW JET CAUGHT THE THIEF.

A True Story.

JET was a large black retriever dog, the property of a gentleman and lady residing in Manchester. They were very fond of Jet, and he was very fond of them, and he seemed to understand almost everything that was said to him. Each night he was chained in the yard, but all day he was left unfastened, and was at liberty to go in and out of the garden or house as he pleased.

The yard and outhouses belonging to Mr. Millen's dwelling were rather extensive, and they were walled in and isolated from the surrounding houses.

One afternoon Mrs. Millen had occasion to go to the washhouse, which was at the side of the house and detached from the other buildings. To her great alarm and consternation she found three young men, who had come in by a back-door which opened from the main street, and which had been left unfastened. They had closed the door after them, and had managed to reach the washhouse, a distance of about twelve yards, without noise.

When Mrs. Millen came upon them she noticed that they all carried stout hedge-sticks, and the foremost one was stretching himself to look through a small scullery window into the house. Mrs. Millen immediately asked them sharply what they wanted there; but they merely laughed, without making any reply or attempting to retire.

In great fear—for she was entirely alone in the house—but with presence of mind, she called, 'John! John!' (the name of her husband) as though to some one indoors, thinking in this way to frighten them away; but they laughed again in her face. However their laughter was soon changed to alarm, for at the sound of her call for 'John,' to her agreeable surprise, Jet came bounding out of the house, and they took to their heels in consternation, followed by the dog, and before the first one could open the door, Jet had him fast by the trowsers with a noise of worrying enough to frighten the stoutest heart.

All of them were now calling for mercy, and begging Mrs. Millen to call off the dog.

She at last did so, not wishing to let the dog really hurt the man, although he richly deserved it.

As for Jet, he was praised and petted for his cleverness by both master and mistress, and they so often patted his head, calling him 'A good dog,' that at last he seemed to think he had done something wonderful.

Poor Jet is dead now. He lived to be quite an old dog, and when he died his master and mistress felt as if they had lost a friend.

ANNIE M. BARTON.

YOUTHFUL HEROISM.

A BRAVE rescue from drowning by a lad is reported from Dymchurch, near Hythe. A lady who was bathing was carried beyond her depth, and was in danger of being drowned. A visitor to the place, named Cecil Mears, aged thirteen, plunged in, and was the means of bringing her to land.

THE RED STRINGS.

A Chinese Story.



IN connexion with a betrothal in China important ceremonies are performed with two threads of scarlet silk and four long needles. When a betrothal was duly completed it was said that the red strings were tied. The story on which this custom is founded is as follows:—

About eight hundred years ago a certain Chinese student went up to the capital of his province in order to pass the examination, which corresponds with that of our degree of B.A. Being unable to sleep one night he took a walk out to a lake near the city wall. Finding there an old man reading by the moonlight, the student asked what he was studying.

'The matches for all places,' said the old man. 'I always carry about with me the cords with which to tie such as are to be united, and when this cord has been tied the two are bound to come together. You yourself will find your future wife in the home of the old woman who sells vegetables at the north of the lake.'

The young man at once took steps to find his promised wife. Going next day to the place named, he found an old ugly woman nursing a young girl. Believing that the little one would be as ill-favoured as her mother, he hired an assassin to kill the child. In a day or two days he was told that this had been done.

Some years afterwards the young student had become a mandarin. But he was still unmarried, for all attempts at bringing about a match had failed. At last another mandarin gave him his daughter in marriage. She was very beautiful, but always wore an ornament over her left eyebrow.

'Why do you wear an ornament there?' asked the bridegroom.

'When I was a little child,' said his wife, 'my father died suddenly, and my old nurse took me home till my uncle sent for me. One day as she was carrying me out a villain struck me. My nurse fell with me to the ground, and I was taken up for dead. But I recovered, and now I wear my head-dress in this way in order to hide the scar of that wound.'

A. R. B.

A TAME HAWK.

A FEW years ago, while living in the camp, I shot a hawk who used to annoy the chickens, but when examined he was found to be but very slightly wounded on one wing—in fact, more frightened than hurt; so I determined to try if he could be tamed. At first he was very fierce, and resisted all my kindest attentions, although he always ate heartily. Still, after persevering about a month, he at the end of that time would come on my hand to eat, and was in every way perfectly tame. All this time he had the freedom of the yard with the fowls, having had a piece cut off



Tame Hawk.

his wings. Every evening I brought him into my bedroom for the night. But now he began to fly a little, and I thought, 'Well, if he likes to go away, it is a pity to prevent him by again cutting his wings;' so I allowed him to have perfect freedom: but instead of going away, he came of his own free will into my bedroom every evening, perching on whatever he fancied; went out in the morning when the door was opened, sat awhile on the ditch in front of the house and picked his feathers, going off then into the camp, when I saw very little of him until sunset, his hour

for returning to my bedroom. This he continued to do for some ten months, the remainder of the time I had him. When I was away from home for a week once, I was told on my return that he had disappeared the same day I left, but I think he must have been stolen. He often was set upon by the other fowls, who hated him, and on such occasions he would get on his back and defend himself until help arrived, screeching lustily all the time. Often was I amused by strangers on entering the yard catching and bringing him to me as a present.



Dr. Wilson making his way through the gap in the Hedge.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 174.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

HY, Jill! Jill! Gilly Flower! what is it?



It was morning; the early grey dawn was creeping through the trees in the ravine, and the heavy dew hanging on the grass and leaves. Jack had Jill in his arms, and was pressing his warm cheek against hers; and hugging her close to him, with her cold hands tucked into his waistcoat to warm them.

It was an original way of treating fainting, and one not generally recommended by the faculty; but it seemed to answer in this case, for Jill opened her eyes and gasped, and then threw her arms suddenly round his neck so tightly that he could hardly breathe, and she would not let go, and kept crying out,—

'The men, Jack! the men! don't go near them! they'll kill you and put you into the hole! Don't go near them! Hush! they'll hear!'

'Why, Jill!' Jack said, in a slightly throttled voice, trying to disengage her arms from his neck, 'hold hard! what have you been dreaming of? Men? there are no men! You poor, little soul, you got frightened with being here and my being so long coming back, and have fancied all sorts of horrors.'

Fancied! Was it only fancy, then, the man with the scar on his face, and the dark lantern and the sacks of silver. If only Jill had found herself in her bed at home, she might almost have fancied that the whole thing was a dream—the sick woman, and the fright of meeting Jack, and the finding Lance, as well as what she had seen from the window; but there she was in the keeper's cottage in the ravine, and Jack was sitting on the floor and holding her in his arms, and through the open door she could see the stream with the morning mist hanging over it, and could hear the newly awakened birds calling a glad good morning from tree and bush.

She felt giddy and queer, and, when she tried to get up, she found she could not stand on such very trembling legs, and it was only with Jack's help that presently she was able to get to the window from which she had watched the men at their strange, mysterious work. There were the fagots leaning against the bank just as they had done yesterday, and for many a day before that, and only in one place could Jill see that the grass looked trodden or the earth disturbed; but, then, her eyes were weak and dizzy, and she was half inclined to believe Jack's assurances—whenever she began to describe what she had seen, that she had been frightened, and had fancied most of the circumstances.

She was glad to settle down again on Jack's knee, for the walls seemed to nod at her, and the floor danced up and down, and it is as well to have a good firm arm round you when other objects are so light-minded and eccentric.

But in the other room there was a sound of move-

ment, and Jill remembered suddenly, with overwhelming compunction, Lance lying senseless there in the arms of the poor woman, both of them needing help so much, and she made a manful effort to struggle up on to her feet to go to them; but Jack kept her back.

'Dr. Wilson is there,' he said; 'and Lance is ever so much better, and they are going to take him home in a few minutes, when the doctor's man gets here, and you and I are to go on and get it all ready for him, though it looks uncommonly as if I should have to carry you, if you are going to stagger about in that fashion. Oh! you needn't be in a hurry; the doctor's coming to have a look at you in a minute. He's been at me all the way for having left you, as if I could help it,' Jack said, with a little choke in his voice, and a hug that would have consoled poor little Jill if she had been twice as much frightened. 'I should have been back ages before if it had not been for that old duffer. He was out when I got there after some old woman or baby, or something, and I left word that he was wanted at Bengrove in a hurry; and then I had to wait about at the gate to catch him, so that he shouldn't go in and ring the whole house up. I thought he never would come; and if it hadn't been for father, I'd have come back without him; but I thought the governor would have been pretty near done for if he'd found out that you and I and Lance were all kicking our heels out of doors at two o'clock in the morning. And then, when he came, he couldn't make head or tail of what I told him, or understand where Lance was. I don't believe he'd ever heard of the ravine, or knew there was a cottage there, and nothing must do but that he must go in and see father, and I had to hold him by the coat to prevent him; and then he wouldn't believe there was any short cut by the fields, and would go round by the lodge; and I believe he thought it was just a practical joke, and if it had been the first of April he would not have come at any price. And then he walked as slow as twenty snails, and went on jawing me all the time; and he made such a piece of work over that gap in the hedge, that I'd a good mind to leave him sticking there and come on alone.'

'I'm better now, Jack; I'm sure I can walk. But, oh! Jack, they'll let her come too, won't they? She kept whispering to him, Jack, in the night, though he could not hear, talking to him just like Mrs. Davis talks to her baby, and saying bits of hymns and baby prayers, and I think she was almost afraid of your coming back for fear she should be parted from Lance. It seems so funny, doesn't it, that she should take to Lance so much? Now, if it had been you, Jack,' said Jill, looking up into her hero's very smutty face, 'it would not have been so odd. But, perhaps, it's because he's hurt and she's so sorry for him.'

'Perhaps,' said Jack, shortly, turning his face away: and just then Dr. Wilson called him from the next room, and he went, though with rather a hesitation, which Jill set down to his recollection of Dr. Wilson's troublesome behaviour on the way.

She was not quite so sure of her powers of walking as she had tried to persuade Jack she was; so she sat where he had left her for a few minutes, and

then made her way across the room and opened the door that Jack had closed behind him.

She opened it so gently that neither Dr. Wilson nor Jack heard her, and she stood there looking in for quite a minute before they were aware of her presence, when Jack sprang towards her with a cry, and half pushed, half carried her back into the outer room.

But why did he do it? To be sure, Lance looked very bad; if he had been ghastly in the dim candle-light, he looked a hundred times more so in the grey light of morning, with the dark circles under his eyes, and the sickly blue tint of faintness round his lips, and the blood-stained bandage on his head. The doctor had Lance's head raised on his arm, and was giving him, with Jack's help, something from a glass.

Jill was so taken up with Lance, and with watching if he would swallow what they were giving him, that she only gave a glance at the other side of the room, where the woman still sat on the fern bed, as she had sat through the night, with Lance's head on her lap.

Her head was leaning back in the angle of the wall, and though her face looked white and still and strange, there was a look of perfect satisfaction on it, as Jill, who was, as I have said, a quick reader of faces, saw at a glance; and there was a smile on the parted lips, a quiet content on the smooth brow and half-closed eyes.

'She is not afraid now of their taking Lance away from her,' Jill thought; 'she is glad and happy he is better.'

And then Jack flew at her and dragged her out of the room, and held her tight as if he thought she was going to turn silly again and fall down or get giddy; and he looked at her with great tears in his grey eyes, that made hers come springing in a moment out of ready sympathy.

'Don't cry, Jill,' Jack said, as if the tears were not running down his own cheeks. 'I didn't want you to come in and see her; but the doctor says she could not have had a bit of pain.'

'Oh, Jack, what is it? I don't understand?'

And then Jack led her out of the cottage into the open air, where the sun was just glancing through the trees and turning the dewdrops to diamonds, like heavenly love shining on earth's sorrows, and making them bright with the rainbow of hope; and he told her there that when they reached the cottage, the arms that held Lance were cold and stiff, and the breast on which his head was pillowed had ceased to move with the pulse of life.

'But she was smiling, Jack! I'm sure she smiled.'

'Yes,' Jack answered, with a very choking voice. 'I've never seen any one dead before. I didn't know they looked like that. She looks as if she was—all right.'

He could not put what he meant into words, but Jill understood; and I think, perhaps, his schoolboy words came very near the truth, for the 'all wrong' of her sad life was over, and the great and undisturbed 'all right' begun.

(To be continued.)



THE MAN WHO TOOK HIMSELF TO PIECES.

MR. LITTLE, in his book on Madagascar, tells an amusing story of a friend, who, on a journey from the coast to the interior, was much troubled by the curiosity of the natives. Being a fine-looking man with a flowing beard, he excited the admiration and amazement of all. Natives crowded the doors of his hut and jostled one another to get a peep through convenient chinks, giving him all the time their opinion of his eyes, nose, and general appearance. In vain did he shut the door of his hut. They crowded back again, and at last sat down in rings outside the hut to discuss his want of good manners in sending them away. At last the stranger could stand it no longer.

It was a bright moonlight night; he suddenly rushed to the door of his hut, threw it open, and with a loud shout sprang towards the natives. At the same time he drew from his mouth two rows of false teeth and waved them in the air.

The natives took one look at the dreadful sight, and then fled in horror from the presence of 'a man who could take himself to pieces.' A. R. B.



DEMOSTHENES.

A GOOD man named Demosthenes, who lived many hundred years ago, was born in Athens, one of the most splendid cities of Greece. His countrymen had grown idle and wicked through luxury, and Demosthenes tried to persuade them to cast aside their evil habits, and also to warn them against trusting to Philip of Macedonia, a tyrant who wished to conquer Greece. In those days the art of printing was not known, and Demosthenes could only influence them by speaking to them in public places.

The first time he addressed them the audience were in roars of laughter, his manners were so strange and his delivery so peculiar. He could not speak distinctly, he stammered very much, and could not pronounce the letter R. Besides, he had a funny trick of drawing up his right shoulder whenever he spoke. Though his advice was good, the people laughed so much that nobody heard what he said.

But Demosthenes was not to be disheartened, he determined to break himself of these foolish habits. He now walked for hours beside the roaring sea, to accustom himself to the murmuring and shouts of the mob. At another time he walked quickly up a mountain, taking little pebbles in his mouth, and trying to pronounce every word distinctly. Furthermore to cure himself of drawing up his shoulder, he placed himself before a looking-glass, hanging a sword over his right shoulder, so that the edge touched his shoulder at the least movement. And lest he should be tempted to address the Athenians before he was quite broken of his habit, he shaved half the hair from his head, thus being forced to remain in retirement for several months.

The people were very eager to hear Demosthenes



Demosthenes on the Sea-shore.

once more. They crowded the public place for the sake of an hour's amusement. How great was their astonishment when Demosthenes spoke! so changed was he, so eloquent, so wise and good all he said! Not a laugh, not a jest was heard. His solemn warnings against the foreign tyrant startled them, his earnest words against the growing wickedness of the

country moved them to tears. Since then many hundred years have passed, and still the speeches of Demosthenes remain models of eloquence.

Demosthenes was a heathen, and yet he did not hesitate to endure hardships, and he inflicted on himself a voluntary banishment that he might lead his countrymen into the paths of virtue and wisdom.



DOG WITH BROKEN LEG.

A DOG having been run over by a carriage, had his leg broken, and a humane surgeon passing at the time took the dog to his surgery, set his leg, and having cured him, discharged his patient—aware that he would return to his old master. Whenever the dog met the surgeon he never failed to recognise him by wagging his tail, and by other signs of joy. One day, a violent barking was heard at the surgeon's

door, which was being made by this dog, who was striving to gain admittance for another dog, who had just had his leg broken. This anecdote appeared in a contemporary magazine in 1873. It is a remarkable fact that, ten years later, we find a similar story related, and authenticated by the house-surgeon of Charing Cross Hospital in connexion with that institution.

THE SHEPHERD'S CHILDREN.



IN a Highland cottage, thatched with rushes and built of rough grey stone, there lived, some years ago, a shepherd with his wife and six children. The cottage stood in a sheltered nook near the head of a wild valley, down which there bounded a clear mountain stream. In summer the older children went to the village school two miles away, but during the storms of winter they had to stay at home and read over their lessons to mother, who greatly valued her children's education. Except on Sundays she was seldom away from her home, but on that day the shepherd and his wife took it by turns to lead their little flock down the valley to the village church as soon as the soft notes of the bell floated upwards on the morning air. These were happy times to David Cogan and his wife, both of whom were quiet, sober persons, with an earnest desire to do their duty to God and man.

Their eldest daughter, Mary, was a very helpful child; her mother had taught her well, and the girl at twelve years of age could milk the cow, knit, cook, and keep the baby, and every mother knows that such a little daughter is quite a blessing in a poor man's household.

But one day in winter new duties fell upon Mary, which tried the poor child to the uttermost. Her parents had to go from home on important business; there was snow on the ground, but the morning was fine, and to shorten their journey they determined to take a footpath across the hill. Promising to return before night, and with many charges to Mary, the parents set out on their way, reached the town of Crieff, and after transacting their business, turned their faces homeward.

Meanwhile, evening drew on, Mary heaped peats on the fire, while all the children gathered round, keeping watch for the sound of their parents' returning footsteps.

But it grew late and dark, and still they did not come. Mary went to the door and peered out into the gloom, it was snowing hard, and the wind was moaning round the hills, so as to terrify the girl. She bolted the door, and returned to her little flock in silence, her heart beating with fear. Her brothers next her in age were afraid too; they sat for a while listening to the wind, till suddenly both boys began to sob and cry.

Then Mary made a great effort to put away her fears; went from one to the other, consoling and cheering, till at length she got them all safe to bed. How lonely the girl felt when all the others were asleep we can easily imagine. She sat by the fire praying and weeping by turns till she too fell into a deep sleep.

Next morning the little cottage was almost buried in snow, and still there was no sign of her dear parents' return. She dressed the little ones, gave them some food, and tried to soothe the wailing baby, who would not be comforted by any of her simple

wiles. What should she do? Another long day passed, but she did not forget the poor cow whose distressed cries she could hear in the cabin. With her brothers' help she reached the poor animal, and brought a supply of warm milk for the baby and the other children.

That second night, as the baby was being undressed, Mary said, 'Let us all kneel down and say "Our Father," and pray God to send them home.'

And so they did, the little suppliants weeping while Mary with a trembling voice repeated the well-known words. Greatly comforted by this appeal to the Father in Heaven, the weary children fell asleep, folded in each other's arms.

That second night the frost broke up; a tempest of wind rocked the little cottage to its foundations; but the deserted children slept on. Early in the morning Mary sprung from her bed. A rushing noise was in her ears and mingling in her dreams. The mountain stream was now a raging torrent, thundering down the glen; but the girl rose and dressed herself—if the snow was gone she might possibly make her way to the village and seek for help.

Never before had Mary taken such a walk, even with father's strong arm to help his child. Slipping and stumbling, cold, wet, and blinded by wind and rain, she still pushed on till she came to the footbridge over the torrent. It swayed about like a cradle, and, just as she feared, the handrail was gone, while the dark and rushing water foamed and gurgled below.

It was a terrible moment for the shepherd's child; but she seemed to see her parents lying helpless in some snow-wreath, and with a brave heart she watched for a lull in the blast, and with a light and swift step she reached the other side.

When the poor weeping child told her sad story the kindly villagers were filled with wonder and alarm. Soon a search party was dispersed over the hill, and though hours were passed in the search it was successful at last. They found David with his leg broken, and nearly insensible from suffering and cold. Eagerly they asked about his wife, when he pointed to a rock over which he had fallen. 'Up there,' he said; 'but oh, she must be dead, she canna have lived through this awful time!'

Mrs. Cogan, however, was not dead; she was alive and uninjured, and, strange to say, felt neither hunger nor cold. It was a touching sight to see the reunited family after the poor parents had been, with the greatest difficulty, conveyed home.

It was by that time quite dark, the peat fire had died out, the exhausted and sleeping children lay on the floor. But oh, the waking, and the joyful kisses, the tender clasp of dear mother's arms!

It was not till the next day that Mary, who had been detained in the village, returned home.

'It was you that saved us, my bonny bairn,' said her father; 'but were ye no feared to cross the bridge?'

'Aye, father; but I was thinking of mother and you, and so I just went on.'

Mary still lives in her happy mountain home, and does not know that those who hear of her brave journey on behalf of her parents will call her a youthful heroine.

D. B. McKRAN.

A GENEROUS LAWYER.

LORD LYNTHURST found one day amongst his letters an appeal from a person whose name he did not recognise. The letter declared its writer to be in a state of absolute want through old age and ill-health, and appealed earnestly for aid. His lordship, having read the whole, handed it to his clerk, bidding him prepare a cheque for five pounds and send it to the writer.

'My lord,' said the secretary, on reading the signature, 'are you aware who this person is?'

'No,' was the reply, 'the name appears quite strange to me.'

'Well, it is the notorious —, who has been so grossly abusing your lordship in the papers for some time past.'

Lord Lyndhurst took the letter and read it through once more. Then laying it down he said, 'Oh, never mind what he has been saying about me. He really seems to be in a very distressed condition, so get the cheque ready and send it.'

A. R. B.



BIRDS' NESTS.

HE use of the nest is to keep up a high degree of heat for the hatching of eggs, and for their protection. The guinea-fowl lays its eggs on the ground, but the shells are so hard that the snakes cannot break them: moreover, to provide against accidents, she lays more eggs than any other bird. As for the penguin, she carries

her eggs with her, wherever she goes.

Every bird has its own plan of building, but in the villages near London, where materials are scanty, Mr. White says the beautiful nest of the chaffinch has not that elegant appearance it has elsewhere; nor can the wren make its house so round and compact as usual.

The snipe likes moory ground. The woodcock lays her four eggs in a dry bank. Jackdaws like steeples, but where steeples are wanting old cunning Jack will build in a rabbit's burrow. And he will make his nest of the queerest things. Clothes-pegs, and lucifer-match-boxes, and labels from a garden, have been found there. The lack of big trees has obliged other birds to resort to strange places. Thus magpies have actually built nests in gooseberry-bushes, and rooks in young ash-saplings not more than ten feet high.

The reed-warbler likes a tuft of rushes, or a low thorn fence, while the reed-wren chooses a higher position, either in a poplar or a tall lilac. As to the redwing and fieldfare, White tells us that no one has ever found their nests or young in any part of England. Linnaeus informs us that the fieldfare builds in Sweden in the largest trees, while the redwing makes its nest in the midst of shrubs or hedges: it has six eggs of sea-green colour with black spots. White owls often build under the eaves of a church.

When the mice begin to stir, about an hour before sunset, out go the owls, and back they come again, once in five minutes, with a mouse in their claws.

The stock-pigeon breeds in holes such as are common in old trees. The sparrow-hawk will sometimes, like the sparrow, condescend to use another bird's nest. Rooks are very unkind, and will often pull each other's nest to pieces. The honey-buzzard makes a large shallow nest of twigs, and lines it with the dead leaves of the beech. The ring-ousel and the kingfisher build on banks and cliffs by a river side. Perhaps we know more about the swallow as a mason than any other bird. He gets such dirt as comes most readily to hand, and works into it bits of straw. He knows he must not get on too fast, therefore he works only in the morning, and amuses himself in the afternoon. Half an inch a-day is about his allowance of work. In ten or twelve days the nest is finished. The outside is rough, but the interior is very soft and warm. If the pert sparrow does not seize upon the nest, the swallow will breed there several years running. The eggs are white, with spots. Sometimes, when a sparrow has taken possession of a swallow's nest, a number of swallows will assemble and close up the hole, so that the dishonest sparrow dies of hunger in his prison.

Some swallows build in chimneys, five or six feet down. This nest is open at the top, and like half a deep dish. A chimney must be an inconvenient place, but it is chosen for safety.

The sand-martin scoops a round hole in the bank, and there makes a nest of goose-feathers and fine grass. He also coats the sandy sides with fish-spawn, or something like it, to keep the sand from falling. It is wonderful how these weak birds, with soft bills and claws, can bore such holes in the sandbank. The swift, like the sand-martin, is no builder, but makes an untidy bed in holes and crevices of old castles, chalk-pits, or church walls. This bird lays only two eggs, milk-white.

Birds often choose curious places for their nests. A swallow's nest was once found on the knocker of a door: another built his on the handles of a pair of garden shears; while a third made a nest on the wings and body of a dead dry owl! A whitethroat, too, built a comfortable little home in the ironwork on the top of a lamp in Portland Place. Birds are generally very fierce and strong at building-time. A pair of ravens will beat off a vulture or eagle; the blackbird will drive away a cat, or even fly at a man's face; the thrush will chase the sparrow-hawk; and the missel-thrush will suffer no magpie, jay, or blackbird, to come into the garden where the young ones are being reared.

Birds, too, will show much devotion to their young, for they will die with them sometimes rather than forsake them. It is well known that a stork at Delft, who had a nest on the chimney, refused to leave it when the house was burning. The bird, having in vain tried to carry her young ones away, calmly stayed with them and perished. Nor was a raven of Mr. White's acquaintance less noble. A pair of ravens had built their nest in an old oak for many a year, and in such a position that the boldest lads in the village dared not reach it. But one early spring the tree was cut down. In spite of the noise made



Birds' Nests.

by saw and mallet, the raven kept to her nest, and was killed by the fall of the tree.

Birds, too, are clever at correcting mistakes. A pair of fly-catchers once built their nest in a place which was too much exposed to the heat. They felt the heat would kill their tender brood, so during the most sultry hours they hovered over the nest, and thus screened off the sunshine from their suffering young ones. A pair of robins, too, once made a mis-

take, for the nest was built in a wagon which had been packed for a long journey. The clumsy vehicle at last began to move, and the robins, instead of hanging themselves in despair, cheerfully went along with it. The wagoner was a kind man, and he took special care not to disturb the nest; and you will be glad to hear that the loving pair and their little ones returned in safety, after a journey of not less than a hundred miles.



Martin watching the Man with a Dark Lantern.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from page 179.)

CHAPTER XXIV.

JILL was too entirely overcome by the events of the night to be fit for anything but to be carried straight into father's room, and then, once more, they changed places, and Jill was tucked up on the sofa, and father sat by her side and soothed the nervous excitement that seemed at first to threaten a serious illness; and perhaps the effort he made to console her and keep her quiet and composed helped to keep off the bad effects that the sudden alarm and anxiety might have had on himself.

As good luck would have it, nurse made her appearance, bandbox, umbrella, and all, just as Lance was being carried into the house, and without waiting or asking for any explanation (concluding, no doubt, that it was only the natural consequence of her being away), established herself as supreme ruler in his room, and managed at the same time to re-establish her tyranny over the whole household, which even the most rebellious of her subjects, Jack himself, acknowledged was a great comfort, and that, after all, liberty, fraternity, and equality may be very fine, but a benevolent despotism is far away more comfortable.

Jack, having made a hearty breakfast, was ordered off to bed by Dr. Wilson; but it was no use, Jack made up his mind, lying tossing about on his bed with the sun staring at him on each side of the blind, and Davy coming every ten minutes or so to see if he was asleep; so he got up and dressed, and resolved to go up and find Martin and tell him all that had happened. But he had hardly got downstairs when Martin himself appeared also in the greatest state of excitement.

'Hullo! have you heard?' cried Jack.

'Hullo! have you heard?' said Martin, almost simultaneously.

And then both stopped for a second, and both again burst out, 'What is it?'

I do not know how they both contrived to tell their stories, for Martin had quite as much to tell as Jack had, and they were both anxious to relate their adventures, and what between interrupting and both speaking at once, and asking questions and not listening to the answers, it must have required intelligence very much above the average for either of them to have arrived within a mile of the truth. But as the reader already knows Jack's share in the night's adventures, it will be better to tell Martin's in somewhat less confused fashion than it was conveyed to Jack that morning.

Joe Mottram had been in the sulks all the evening, though Martin had done his best to amuse him, and had taken more pains about it than he had ever done in his life before, and he felt that if every day was to be such uphill work as this, the week that Mr. and Mrs. Mottram were to be away would seem like a century.

The house seemed dreadfully empty and dull, and Martin felt that there is something more required for the enjoyment of life than comfortable arm-chairs, a library full of books, or a billiard-table. It

was quite a relief when the door leading to the servants' quarters was opened now and then, and cheerful voices and movement could be heard, and he was beginning to debate if even the society of Captain Nethercoat might not have been a welcome variety in the monotony of the long evening, with Joe pretending to read *Punch* and dropping off to sleep every few minutes, and nodding his heavy head as if he would dislocate his neck with the next convulsive jerk. Time never went so slowly at Bengrove, or at school either, and Martin kept looking at the clock to see when he could have any decent excuse for proposing to go to bed, and more than once he thought the clock must have stopped.

At last ten struck on the little silvery bell of the drawing-room clock and was echoed by the deeper note of the hall clock, and a minute afterwards the old butler brought in the bed-room candles, and asked if the young gentlemen required anything further, and woke Joe out of a sound nap.

'Well!' he said, stretching himself with a tremendous yawn, 'I shall go to bed;' and Martin was only too glad to follow his example.

Martin's bedroom was next to Joe's, and the servants slept at the back of the house, and so far away and shut off, that it seemed to Martin as if he and Joe were alone in a great wilderness, and, though he was not at all given to nervous fancies, and would have laughed at the notion that he was the least frightened, he could not help wishing that some one was within call.

Though he was not indulged, as Jill had been, with the best bedroom in the house, still his was as comfortable as heart could wish; so it was not for want of comfort that Martin could not, as he usually did, drop off to sleep directly his head touched the pillow, but he kept tossing, and turning, and listening, and fancying he heard noises, and thinking of the jewel robbery at Lord Carbrook's, and of the many valuable things at Hill Park that might make it a mark for burglars.

When at last he dropped asleep, his dreams carried on his waking thoughts, and he was in the middle of a terrible affray with burglars in black masks, when the opening of his door woke him suddenly, and he sat up in bed saying, 'Who's there?' prepared for the immediate demand 'Your money or your life!' when it would hardly have been worth while to sacrifice the latter to save the former, seeing that he had only left 6½d. in his waistcoat pocket.

But the expected burglar was Joe Mottram, and instead of any threats or even sulks, he very humbly asked if he might stop in Martin's room the rest of the night as he had been woke by some noise and was a little bit nervous. This was a mild way of putting it, as his teeth were chattering and his knees knocking together with fright, and, when Martin struck a light, he saw that he was in a regular scare.

'What did you hear?'

'Knocking.'

'Rats,' said Martin, decidedly.

'And scratching.'

'Nice.'

'And whistling.'

'Owls. Here, get into bed.'

Joe looked so ridiculous standing there in his short night-shirt, with his big ears and starting eyes, that Martin could hardly help laughing, he was so suggestive of Little Red Ridinghood's Wolf, 'What big ears you have, grandmother!' 'The better to hear you with, my dear.'

But Martin was merciful to Joe and refrained from chaff, and made him get into bed, though Joe was quite prepared to sleep on the floor or in a chair if Martin would only let him stay in the room; and Martin's presence seemed to have an immediate effect in calming Joe's fears, for he was soon sound asleep and snoring so lustily, that Martin thought if there had been any noises to hear, he should scarcely have heard them.

But presently through the snores a sound reached Martin's ears, and this time he felt sure there was no mistake, and some one was in the room on the opposite side of the passage, which he knew was Mrs. Mottram's room. Without rousing Joe he got out of bed, and opened his door a crack, and looked, and listened, and saw from under Mrs. Mottram's door a line of light shining, and heard the sound of a drawer being opened.

What should he do? Could it be one of the servants? but if it were, what could they be doing there at this time of night? it could be with no good purpose. But while he was hesitating what to do, the door opened very softly and a man came noiselessly out. He carried a dark lantern in his hand, so that his face was in shadow, but there was something familiar to Martin about him, though he was too excited and highly strung to realise who it was that the man's height and movements suggested to him.

Happily the man did not notice the partly-opened door, but turned, and went so hastily and noiselessly down the passage, that Martin might almost have fancied it was only another of those vivid dreams of burglars from which Joe's coming had roused him. As quick as possible, he slipped on some clothes and followed along the passage and out on to the large staircase. It was all perfectly quiet and dark, only a dim light coming through the large staircase window, and touching here and there on the pictures of Martin's ancestors or on a helmet or breast-plate in the stands of old armour.

Was it only his fancy? He groped his way back to his room and lighted a candle, and then set off, with some trepidation, to find the servants' rooms. If it was, indeed, a burglar he had seen, he might meet him at any turn; if it was not, the servants would not bless him for waking them up on a false alarm.

When at last he had found the place, it was some time before he could wake the old butler, whose solemn snores echoed along the passage; and when awake, he altogether declined to believe Martin's story, and wanted indignantly to know if it was likely he should not have been the first to hear any noise when he had not closed his eyes for a single wink all night.

But Martin would not let him turn over to renew his sleepless rest, and at last he called to Parker, who was in the next room, to get up and go down with the young gent to satisfy him, as there wasn't

nothing wrong. This Parker did very unwillingly, grumbling under his breath, and peering about with sleepy eyes as he followed Martin through dining-room, drawing-room, library, billiard-room, morning-room, where all was just as it had been left the evening before, Joe's *Punch* on the chair where he had tossed it, and Martin's book lying open.

'Well,' Parker said, not very respectfully, 'I suppose now a fellow can go back to bed? And if you'll excuse me, sir, if I was you I'd take a little something before I went to bed; there's nothing like it for keeping off the nightmare as often has it myself.'

Martin was beginning to believe it really was only a particularly vivid dream; but before going back to bed, he turned towards the kitchen.

'Why, you're never going round all the offices!' said Parker, in dismay, 'as swarms with rats and beetles and all sorts!'

'No; but I'll just have a look into the kitchen and pantry,' Martin said; 'but hullo!—' for as he opened the pantry-door his candle was suddenly blown out, and Parker began running his hardest towards the back-stairs.

'Hold hard!' said Martin, 'it's nothing but the draught. I've got a match here. There's nothing to be frightened at!' And Martin pushed open the door and marched in, followed by Parker at a discreet distance.

There was certainly nothing to be frightened at, for the room was empty; but so also were the plate-chests, and the window was open, showing the way by which their contents had been removed.

There was no more sleep for the old butler after that, nor for any one else in the house either, for Parker ran upstairs, screeching out 'Murder! thieves! fire!' and in a minute or two the whole household was collected in the pantry, most of them in very scanty clothing, and, for the most part, staring blankly at one another and at the plate-chests, where the green-baize nooks and niches showed where forks and spoons, salvers and cups, had hitherto rested, but rested no longer.

Old Miller, the butler, was purple in the face, and shook so that the keys he held in his trembling hand played quite a tune with their jingling.

'I locked 'em up quite safe,' he kept saying, 'and the keys was under my pillow! They couldn't have got hold of 'em anyhow!'

But that was 'neither here nor there,' as Mrs. Hudson, the housekeeper said, which was not a very lucid remark, as the keys had plainly been *there* under Mr. Miller's pillow, and had not apparently been needed *here*, as the chests had been opened without them.

It was very apparent how the thieves had entered; they must have mounted on the long roof over the scullery, over which the pantry-window looked out, and then have forced back the bolt, and raised the window, and cut a hole in the shutter to unfasten it.

What else had they taken? Nothing apparently from the downstairs rooms; but Martin led the way to Mrs. Mottram's room, followed by Parker, who began to be very valiant now there was nothing to be afraid of, and a tail of maids, who screamed whenever a door creaked, and bent a hasty retreat



Martin leading the way to Mrs. Mottram's room.

when they caught a sudden glimpse of their own somewhat dishevelled persons in a mirror.

In Mrs. Mottram's room the drawers had been ransacked, but it was hoped without much result, as Mrs. Mottram had taken most of her jewelry with her.

Poor old Miller could not be induced to leave the pantry, where he remained crying and wringing his hands over the empty plate-chests, entirely unable to advise what ought to be done, and it was Martin who suggested that the police had better be communicated with at once. But who was to go? Old Miller was quite hysterical; Parker suddenly discovered that he had cut his foot and was hardly able

to walk; while the other footman, who tremulously offered to go, was forcibly prevented by one of the housemaids to whom he was engaged; and Tom, the page boy, hid at the bare suggestion that he might go.

So there was no one but Martin who would venture; and when he set off, he heard the door barred and bolted behind him as soon as ever he was outside. He went to the stables to rouse the men who slept there, but this was not an easy matter. How sound they slept. Martin knocked and hammered till he was tired, and shouted till he was hoarse, before he could make any one hear; and then it took ever so long to make them understand what



The Charcoal-burner's Hut.

had happened, and that they must put a horse into the dog-cart at once and drive down to Shettle; and there again the very same had to be gone through, and, if it were possible, the police seemed more sleepy and stupid than the stablemen.

But, when they were once aroused to the importance of the matter, they were wide awake enough, and the detective who was down from London about the Carbrook jewel robbery was called up, and Martin was entirely set aside, and hustled into a corner while they made preparations for going off at once to the scene of action.

He did not, in truth, present a very imposing appearance, as his dressing had been of a very hasty description and he was devoid of collar and tie, and had caught up somebody else's hat, several sizes too large for him, and, perhaps, in the haste and bustle,

the Shettle policemen did not realise who he was, for two of them climbed into the cart with the London detective, and just as Martin had his foot on the step ready to get in, they told the stable man to drive off, and left him standing there in the dark street, under the dim lamp burning outside the police station.

(To be continued.)

THE CHARCOAL-BURNER'S HUT.

YOU'VE neither home nor friends, you say,
 And you, so young, poor lad!
 Ah, well, I'm pleased to see you here,
 I'll give you fire and food to cheer
 Your heart, and make you glad.

Just sit you down and rest a bit,
And do not tremble so;
I once was young myself, you see,
And life was very hard to me
In those days—long ago.

For, like yourself, I was alone,
My parents both were dead,
And I was left upon the street
To wander with my weary feet
In search of daily bread.

I found it, oh! so hard to live,
With none to care for me,
And so I left the noisy town,
And in the pine-wood settled down
A charcoal boy to be.

'Twas not an easy life, you'll say,
The work was hard and long,
And so it was; but then, you see,
I lived beneath the green-wood tree,
I heard the wild bird's song.

And oh, but liberty is sweet!
And God's green wood is dear;
I loved it then, I love it yet,
Although I've lost my own Jeannette—
She only lived a year.

And then she left me for the skies,
How sad I felt that day!
But, boy, you have no other home,
Now wherefore should you further roam?
I'd gladly have you stay.

Ah! Claude has found a home at last,
A home with good old Joe,
And had he searched the wide world round
No better home could he have found
Than this poor hut I know.

For though the cold wind blew outside,
And snow would fluttering fall,
The crackling fire burned warm and bright,
And Claude's young heart felt cheered and light,
For love was over all.

D. B.

THE DOCTOR AND THE GROCER.

A PHYSICIAN, who was seeking a post at Bartholomew's Hospital many years ago, called upon a neighbouring grocer, who was one of the governing body, to ask for his vote. The grocer, who was in his counting-house, saw the doctor enter the shop, and at once guessed his errand. Accordingly, he put on his coat, and with an air of great consequence presented himself behind the counter.

'Well, friend,' he said to the doctor, in very patronising tones, 'and what is your business?'

'I want a pound of plums,' said the doctor; and, when the mortified grocer had weighed and packed them, he left the shop without mentioning the object of his visit.

A. R. B.

THE STOCKING-WEAVER OF INGOLSTADT.

TOWARDS the end of the 16th century, Zacharias Sardermann, a master-weaver, died at Ingolstadt in Bavaria. He left two sons, both very young, Matthias and Daniel; he left no worldly goods, nay he was deeply in debt at the time of his death. To pay themselves, the creditors seized the house of the deceased, and took possession of all that it contained. His two sons, therefore, determined to leave their father's residence and their native town. They said farewell to each other, and departed to seek their fortunes far away from their home, in opposite directions.

Many years had elapsed since the departure and separation of the two brothers, and they were almost forgotten in their native town, when one day Daniel, the younger of the two, returned once more. An ass which he brought with him bore on its back two small, but weighty chests. Daniel sold the animal, and carried the chests into a little room which he had leased in a retired part of his native place. In the chests were the several portions of a stocking-loom, which he had bought in Venice with the money he had saved. A carpenter was employed to make him a stand for it, the machine was put together, and now cheerfully and contentedly he set to work.

The room which Daniel Sardermann inhabited had several attractions. No houses stood in front of its windows. When the stocking-weaver rested after his work he could gaze over the thick walls of Ingolstadt, far away into the wide and beautiful valley of the Danube. But that which made his little room specially dear and pleasant to him was, that it was in the house which had formerly belonged to his father. Here he was born and grew up, here he had passed the happy days of his childhood, and the days of his youth. With this room a thousand sad and sweet recollections were associated, and the hope awoke in his heart that he would one day be able to buy the beloved old house, and thus regain possession of the inheritance of his father. Though many years might pass away before that, yet it was by no means impossible, for Daniel was an industrious and clever workman. The caps and stockings which he wove with his loom sold well. He required, too, very little to support himself. He had neither wife nor child. An old woman came every evening to arrange and clean up his lodging, to carry away the goods he had made for sale, and to fetch his victuals or anything else he might require. As the stocking-weaver was an economical and contented man, and God blessed the labour of his hands, he was gradually able to lay by a little sum, with which he hoped one day to be able to satisfy the earnest wish of his heart.

But, unfortunately, this honest man's lodging had one great and disagreeable drawback. Solomon says, 'Better is a neighbour that is near than a brother afar off.' Daniel Sardermann's brother was far away indeed, and he had heard nothing of him for many, many years: but he had no reason to be pleased with 'a neighbour that is near,' for alas! it was a very bad neighbour who inhabited the story just below him. This was the schoolmaster, Fabian Duft, who lived there with his sister. The schoolmaster was a very

inquisitive man, who was very fond of troubling himself a great deal too much about other people's business; moreover, he was a conceited fellow, who, although he was only the teacher of a very small school, yet thought a great deal of his wisdom, and professed to know more than other people. These peculiarities did not make him either an amiable or desirable neighbour. Scarcely had the stocking-weaver opened his loom and worked at it for an hour, than Fabian Duft was listening at the door of his room, in order perhaps in this way to get at his neighbour's secrets. But he heard nothing except a singular noise which he could not explain to himself, and now and then the singing of a favourite hymn with which Daniel used to accompany the labour of his hands.

The schoolmaster was not long content with this. He crept down the stairs as quietly as he had come up them. Then he turned back again, went up the steps with firm and noisy tread, and entered the stocking-weaver's room. Daniel was about to rise politely from his chair to greet the unexpected visitor. But Fabian Duft would not suffer this; he begged him to remain sitting and to work quietly on. He was particularly desirous to become acquainted with the new machine, its working, and construction. He examined it with curious looks, after the master at his request had put it in motion; then he nodded approval, as if he perfectly understood the matter; sometimes, however, he would shake his head thoughtfully, as if he did not quite approve this or that part of the machine. At last, with rather a patronising air, he said, 'Yes, it is not a bad affair, certainly. But the man who made it did not thoroughly understand the matter. Much in the machine is needless and only hinders its certain and easy working, other parts must be improved, then the whole affair will greatly gain, and work much better. It is a piece of good luck for you, master, that you have come to the right man in this matter. I will take the affair into further consideration, and to-morrow or the day after I will lay before you a plan as to how your machine must be altered and improved.'

The poor stocking-weaver, who was a very modest and also a very timid man, was alarmed at these words of his neighbour. He was about to raise a few mild objections against the opinion expressed by the schoolmaster, who, reading on his face what was passing in his mind, said quickly, 'You need say nothing about it, master. I do this with real pleasure, as a friendly neighbour, and do not ask any payment for it; so make yourself quite happy about it. I shall come again to-morrow, and then we will take the loom to pieces, and arrange it much better. Good morning.'

Before Daniel Sardermann could say a word in reply, the schoolmaster was out through the door, and had vanished from his eyes. The poor stocking-weaver was a long time before he could get over his fright and dismay. He loved and valued his machine, for he had bought it with money which he had earned and saved with difficulty. The entire arrangement of it, too, was so skilful and well conceived, that he could not imagine how it was possible to improve it. Worry and anxiety on the subject kept him awake throughout the night, and he looked forward with terror to the next day and to the

execution of his neighbour's plans. But this fear was quite unfounded. The schoolmaster had suddenly changed his mind. He no longer thought of improving the machine, but wished now to lay before his neighbour a plan which, in his opinion, was a much better and more advantageous one. Fabian Duft was one of those people who greatly prefer to get other people to work for them, than to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their own brow. So now the thought had come into his head, with his sister's money and his own to construct ten or twelve of these looms, and to engage as many stocking-weavers to work in his service. This he reckoned would bring him in a very tidy profit, by means of which he would be able to live in comfort, and perhaps entirely to give up his wearisome post of schoolmaster.

Next morning he again went up to his neighbour, and said to him in a very decided tone, 'Master Sardermann, I have come to the conclusion on further reflection, that your loom does not require any alteration. On the contrary, I have determined to have ten or twelve others constructed after the model of it. You must therefore allow twelve of my strongest and cleverest scholars to come here, that you may teach them how to work at the loom. The little trouble which they may give you will in time be richly compensated, for I shall appoint you with a good salary as master in my large factory.'

At this proposal poor Daniel was more frightened than he had been by that of yesterday. Must he then admit twelve wild boys into his quiet room? Must he to please his neighbour be pestered and tormented with these boys from morning till night? Must he allow his valuable and costly loom to be worked and injured by their rough and unskilful hands? That was utterly impossible. The usually modest and timid man summoned up all his courage, and said with firmness, 'Excuse me, neighbour, but I cannot and will not consent to this proposal.'

The schoolmaster had not in the least expected this refusal. But he concealed his vexation as well as he could, and only replied, 'Owing to the duties of my school I have not time now to talk this matter over more fully with you; but I will come again, and then we will further discuss my proposal. You will see, master, that I mean well with you, and that you can do nothing better than consent to my plan; but I will give you time to think over the whole affair. Farewell for the present.'

Therewith, Fabian Duft again disappeared from the room, and was down the staircase before the stocking-weaver could reply to his words. The sly man now quickly conceived a fresh plan to get the master and his loom into his service, so that he might use him to his own profit. To this end, his sister, who, owing to her quarrelsome character, was frequently an insufferable burden to him, was to be the instrument. She should and must marry the stocking-weaver. Then he could not refuse to assent to carry out his brother-in-law's plans. But even if this were not the case, the trouble and vexation caused by so ill-tempered a wife would surely bring him to an early grave; then Fabian would be his next of kin, and would by this means obtain his object.

(Concluded in our next.)



Fabian Duft examining the Machine.



The old Countrywoman going to the Train.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from p. 189.)

CHAPTER XXV.



HERE is no denying that Martin was extremely disgusted when he found himself left in the lurch by the police, and he would have gone off to Bengrove and left them to catch the thieves as best they could without him, if he had not thought, what was not, as we know, the case, that all at home were snug in bed,

and that he should most likely disturb the whole household by coming home at four o'clock in the morning, for that was the hour that struck out from the old church tower as he stood there.

He was cold and tired and disgusted, and the first excitement had passed off, and he felt as if he did not much care if the thieves were taken or the property recovered, as he slowly took his way back to Hill Park. He did not choose the shorter way across the ravine; if he had done so, he might have come across some of those whom he imagined to be peacefully sleeping in their beds at home; but went along the road, where the outlines of the hedges and trees were beginning to get more defined in the gradual approach of day and the sky to brighten faintly in the east.

Early as it was some of the farm-labourers were astir already, and Martin met one or two clumping stolidly along in their great clumsy boots to their long day's work. But it was none of these honest sons of toil that Martin saw suddenly appear upon the road before him, coming from a field adjoining the park. They came so silently and disappeared so quickly into the twilight that for a moment Martin stood looking after them, hardly recognising what it was, before he set off as fast as he could in pursuit.

The burglars! Who else could it be coming so quickly and silently at this hour in the morning? He did not stop to think what he should do if he overtook them, and if they turned on him what was likely to happen: he had a general sort of feeling that right was might, and that in stories of gallant captures of burglars the captors generally got the best of it, so he made after them at the top of his speed.

The road they were on led on, after it had passed the Hill Park Lodge, to the Woodleigh Station, and as he went, Martin remembered there was an early train from there, which the men were evidently going to take, believing, no doubt, that the burglary at Hill Park had not been discovered, and that no alarm would be given till the servants were about in the morning, which at Hill Park was not too early, and till they were miles away with their booty.

He came in sight of the men again after passing the Lodge, which confirmed his idea that they were bound for the station; but, after that, he entirely lost sight of them, though the light was much clearer by this time and he could see a much greater distance in

front of him than he could when he first saw them. He could see nothing of them, and the road was neither muddy nor dusty enough to show any traces.

But just then the sound of wheels coming along the road from Woodleigh caught his ear, and he eagerly hailed the driver of the cart, as it came up, to ask if he had met two men on the road. But it was the mail-cart, and the driver refused to stop in spite of all Martin's shouts and gesticulations, and finally proceeded to use his whip freely when Martin caught hold of the back of the cart.

But the sight of the mail-cart reminded Martin that the train did not leave Woodleigh till nearly six, and it could not yet be much past five; so he made up his mind to go quietly on to Woodleigh, asking any one he happened to meet, for as the day went on there would certainly be more people about to notice the two strange men. He had not gone far before he received a very satisfactory confirmation of his idea that he was on the right track. A waggon from the mill was pulled up by the side of the road, and the waggoner was examining a lantern, which, to Martin's eye, looked like the very same he had seen in the hand of the man coming out of Mrs. Mottram's bedroom.

"Twere just chucked over the hedge, pretty near out of sight, and I'd never have seen it if I'd not been cutting a stick. 'Tis a queer-looking thing enough, but whoever it be don't deserve to find un again, being so careless like or maybe drunk last night, and it's the very mortal thing as I'm wanting, so I'll say thank ye, and say no more about it. 'Finding's keepings,' I've heard tell."

And with that he stowed it away in the waggon and went on; and so did Martin, quite satisfied, and not to be discouraged though three other people he met declared that they had seen no one on the road.

When he came in sight of the Woodleigh Station he found that it was not open yet, nor woke up from the repose into which it settles after the last train has run through at eleven o'clock at night. The old porter had just turned out of his cottage close by, with the station keys in his hand, and was stopping to tie up a straggling sweet-william and pull out an impudent weed in his gay, little garden, as if there were no such things as hurry or express trains in existence, leave alone burglaries and gallant captures.

Martin grew impatient of his delay at last, and crossed over and met him just as he came out of his gate. No doubt Martin's story sounded very incoherent to the old man, who was too much accustomed to be made an April fool of all the year round to take in everything that a strange boy might tell him; and, certainly, as I have said, Martin's appearance was not such in itself as to inspire respect.

So Murphy, the old porter, looked very incredulously at him, and, being rather deaf, confused the matter still further, and ultimately grumbled out something about 'Pack o' nonsense!' and being 'too old a bird to be caught by such-like chaff,' and turned on his heel and went off about his duties, sweeping out the little ticket office, making the dust go principally in Martin's direction, but otherwise taking no further notice of him.

Presently the train was signalled as having left

Shettle; but no passenger for it had yet appeared at the Woodleigh Station, either burglars or any honest folk. Martin wondered if they were in hiding till the train came in, and then would make a desperate rush, and jump in at the last moment. He went outside the station and took a look round, but could see no one in any direction, and he then retreated again into the station for fear the men might think they were being watched for.

The train was in sight by this time, a curl of smoke visible round the corner from Shettle, and Martin, in an agony of excitement, dashed out again to look down the road, and as he opened the door ran up against some one coming in, and the sudden shock startled him out of all the calm self-possession he had planned beforehand, and he laid hold of the person entering and dragged him into the station with all the strength he could muster. *Him* did I say? I must beg her pardon, as Martin did the next minute, covered with confusion, for it was an old countrywoman he had laid violent hands on, and a quavering, cracked old voice said, 'Bless and save us! What be that? Be I late for the train? I be shook to a jelly, that I be!'

'Oh, I say! I'm awfully sorry! I thought it was some one else, and I never saw you coming up the road a minute ago, so I didn't know you'd be just outside. I hope I've not hurt you? Oh, no! you're not too late for the train, it's just coming up. Let me hold your basket while you get your ticket,' said Martin, very remorseful for the old woman's choking and gasping.

'There, don't 'ee touch my basket now as is full of eggs for market, as is a wonder they wasn't all smashed along of you!'

'It's not the day for Milton Market,' said Martin; 'that's on Saturday; and oh, I say, how heavy your basket is!'

'Can't you let it bide!' snapped out the old woman; 'as if it ain't enough to frighten a body, till she don't rightly know where she's going and where she ain't.'

But Martin forgot his remorse and his efforts at politeness; for just then the train ran into the station, and he hurried out on to the platform to make sure that the men did not make a rush at the last minute to get into the train.

But there was no one on the platform or coming up the hill, and the old woman seemed the only passenger from Woodleigh; and there were very few people altogether in the train, several of whom Martin knew by sight, and none of whom could by any means be mistaken for a burglar.

The train stopped some time at Woodleigh as trains are apt to do at wayside stations on branch lines, while the guard and Murphy discussed affairs of state—in this case, potatoes, and Martin wandered up and down the platform, climbing on the steps of the carriages to look into each compartment to make sure that no one was concealed under the seat.

The old woman was comfortably settled in a carriage by herself and evidently suspected Martin of further designs on her basket of eggs, which was safely stowed away under the seat.

'Be ye looking for somat?' she piped out.

'It's two men I was looking for,' Martin said;

'I wonder if you saw anything of them as you came up to the station?'

But the old woman shook her head. 'There was two as I met going along towards Shettle,' she said; 'maybe they was the two.'

But just then the whistle sounded and Martin was obliged to shut the door and stand back.

'But, do you know, Jack?' Martin ended, after describing all that had happened to Jack, 'it was very odd, but just as the train set off, the old woman's sunbonnet thing that had been pulled down close over her eyes before, got pushed back somehow, and she had a great scar on her temple, exactly like that man Captain Nethercoat had with him yesterday, a nasty scar running right down to her ear. Wasn't it queer, Jack?'

'Oh, well!' Jack said, 'I suppose dozens of people may have scars just alike. But, I say, Martin, did no one else go by the train?'

'Yes, just at the last moment when the train was moving, Captain Nethercoat came in. He had to go up to London on business, he said. You know I don't like that fellow one bit, Jack, but I will say he's awfully good-natured, for he seemed as friendly as anything, though he must have known that it was my fault Joe Mottram put him off yesterday. But he didn't seem a bit put out; and when I told him what had happened at Hill Park, he was immensely interested and awfully sorry he couldn't stop and help catch the burglars; but he doesn't think they can have got far.'

(To be continued.)

THE HEBREW SLAVE-GIRL IN DAMASCUS.



ABOUT 900 years before Christ came to the earth, a little damsel was carried as a prisoner from her home in Samaria to the city of Damascus. She was torn from her happy home and given to Naaman, a chief captain in the Syrian army and a great favourite with the king, and the little slave-girl became lady's-maid to Naaman's wife.

She was a good and gentle maiden. If she had been spiteful, she would have been pleased to see one thing which took all its brightness out of Naaman's splendid home, all the joy out of his life. He was rich, brave; the king loved him, the people honoured him: but he was a leper. He had a terrible disease, which made his body as 'white as snow,' and which only God could remove so that it should not cause death.

The little maid might have been glad to see Naaman, who had torn her from her own home, suffering from this leprosy; but she was sorry for him. She knew that in her own land God had given great power to Elisha, so that he could even raise the dead and do other wonderful things, and she felt sure that if it pleased God Elisha could cure this leprosy of her master's; and with her heart full of this, one day as she was waiting on her mistress—perhaps she saw



The Hebrew Slave-girl.

Naaman passing—she could not help saying, 'Would God'—that is, I wished that it would please God—that my master were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy!'

The little maiden's words were repeated from one to another till they reached the ears of the King of Syria, and he thought it worth while to try what could be done in Israel for his favourite captain, and so he sent Naaman to Elisha. Elisha told him to go and dip seven times in the river Jordan. At first

Naaman proudly refused, but afterwards, on the advice of his servants, he humbled himself and went; and then his flesh, which had been white and clammy, came again fresh and ruddy, 'like unto the flesh of a little child; and he was clean;' and he confessed that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel, and we may hope that from that time he would worship no other.

Thus the single sentence spoken by the little Hebrew slave-girl led to the great Syrian captain being



Arab Whitewasher.

cured of his leprosy. He went out of Damascus a wretched leper; he came back strong and healthy. He went out an idolater; he came back a worshipper of the only living and true God—the God in whom the little maid trusted, and to whom we may be sure she prayed.

This old story of the little slave-girl in Damascus should teach children now-a-days to do good and to speak good.

ARAB WHITEWASHER.

WHEN you first see an Eastern town at a distance, it looks so dazzlingly white that you imagine all the buildings to be of white marble. The green-painted domes of the mosques, the tall towers and waving palm-trees, all shine in the golden sunlight, and help to make you fancy you are going to a real fairyland. But when you enter the town you find the

whiteness is only lime, and the fairy who produces the beautiful picture is the whitewasher. All the houses and shops are whitewashed, inside and out, at least once a-month. This is done, not only for appearance but for health's sake; as in those hot countries it is necessary to prevent sickness and destroy vermin. The streets are so narrow that into many the bright sun never even peeps, and the whiteness helps to reflect what light there is; but on the flat tops of the houses, where people sit in the evenings, the glare is so intense while the sun is out, that it is not possible to see. Inside the houses the people paint flowers and other pretty designs on the white walls; but many a beautiful bit of sculpture is quite lost beneath the numerous coats of lime put over it.

You see our whitewasher has drawn the hood of his coat over his head; and well he may, for he does not wash the walls with the lime as is done here, but he throws it at the wall, splashing himself and any one near with his dripping brush; and every time he hoists the brush he calls out, '*Baaleck ! baleck ayneck !*—Mind your eyes!—take care!' and if people do not take care, they must take their chance of being blinded. Black men always perform this business, and very droll they look with their black skins shining out from their white-bespattered garments.

A. M. B. Y.

THE STOCKING-WEAVER OF INGOLSTADT.

(Concluded from page 191.)



UT this proposal was more repugnant to Master Sardermann than either of the previous ones. He had often enough listened with silent dismay to the quarreling and storming of the elderly spinster, and an indescribable horror came over him at the thought of being obliged to be constantly in the society of such a woman. So he replied politely and

kindly, but no less firmly and decidedly, 'Pardon me, neighbour, but I cannot for a moment listen to your proposal.'

By this refusal the poor stocking-weaver not only angered the schoolmaster, but his sister as well, to whom he had at once communicated how the well-meant offer had been declined. Both now determined to make their neighbour's life as unpleasant as possible. Henceforth the sister always kept hot coals ready on her hearth, upon these she threw from time to time chips of horn, bones, hair, wet bark, and such-like. From these a thick bad-smelling smoke arose, which passed out through the open kitchen door and up the stairs into poor Sardermann's chamber, and nearly stifled him. The brother at the same time chose out the loudest screamers among his boys, and made them stand for hours at the open door of his room, with orders to read as loud as ever they could out of some book he gave them, so that the quiet-loving weaver was not a little troubled and tormented thereby. After bearing for several weeks with Christian patience these petty persecutions from

his evil neighbours, he determined, but with a very heavy heart, to forsake the house of his fathers and to hire a quiet lodging in another part of the town. But he did not really carry out his intention, for the schoolmaster perceived how little it would profit him if Daniel Sardermann were to leave the house; in that case he would take his loom away with him, and then all chance would be lost for him to derive any profit from the machine. Much more advantageous, on the contrary, would it be for the stocking-weaver to remain, for then he might perhaps secretly take a drawing of all the different parts of the loom, and thus succeed in getting a similar one constructed.

Fabian Duft soon convinced his sister of the advantages of this plan, and now the wicked pair suddenly changed their behaviour. As Master Sardermann was coming downstairs one morning, brother and sister came out of their room, gave him a friendly greeting, and inquired why he was leaving the house and his work so early. He told them plainly and honestly that he was about to seek another lodging. But the cunning schoolmaster took him by the arm and said, 'No, nothing will come of it. In no case can we afford to lose so good and honest a neighbour. Had we only known that the smoke and the loud reading was so disagreeable to you, we would long ago have stopped them both. But henceforth we will no longer trouble you with them; rest assured of that, good neighbour.'

The schoolmaster and his sister kept their promise for the above-mentioned reason; so the stocking-weaver was now quite happy. He could sing undisturbed his favourite hymns in the morning, he could sit and work the whole day quietly and unmolested at his loom, every evening he went regularly for about half-an-hour to church, to strengthen and refresh himself after the burden and heat of the day. He was thoroughly contented now, and never thought again of leaving his father's house to seek another lodging. He was quite ignorant indeed of how cunningly Fabian Duft employed the half-hour which he spent every evening in the church. The schoolmaster had obtained a second key to the weaver's lodging, with which every evening he opened the door of his neighbour's room, where during his absence he measured and took drawings of the different portions of the loom, in order to have ten or twelve new ones constructed to be set at work for his own profit.

Meanwhile the noise of war was approaching nearer and nearer to the quiet little town. Field-marshal Tilly had, on 2nd April, 1632, been defeated by the heroic King of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, on the shores of the river Lech. A three-pounder ball had shattered the right thigh of the Catholic general, and he was borne by his men to Ingolstadt, to be cured or to die there. During the four weeks which elapsed before his death, and which the old general passed in unspeakable agony, he found it necessary to hire a clerk to write for him, as he could not hold a pen himself on his bed of suffering. The burgomaster, in whose house he lodged, strongly recommended to him for this post the schoolmaster, Fabian Duft, who taught children.

Gustavus Adolphus now advanced with his whole

army, and laying siege to Ingolstadt, he attacked the fortress at its weakest part with all his strength and repeatedly. Tilly was informed by his adjutant of all the movements and attacks of the Swedish King. This often occurred in the presence of his new secretary, Fabian Duft, who only too well profited by a good opportunity to avenge himself on his neighbour. When one day the officer had delivered his report, and had returned into the ante-room, the wounded field-marshal remarked to himself, 'It is singular that the enemy should have found out the weakest side of the fortress, and should direct all his attacks to that point. He must certainly have some confederate in the town who has betrayed this to him, and communicates with him by secret signs.'

The schoolmaster-clerk took up these words as if they were addressed to himself. He turned round from his desk to the old general, and said with well-managed cunning, 'If your excellency would graciously permit me, I would express my opinion on this matter. In the house which stands just opposite the weakest part of the town wall, and in which I have taken up my humble abode, there lives also a stocking-weaver. The man came, no one knows whence, to our town about a year ago, and took a lodging in this lonely house, stating that he loved quiet and retirement. I have long been struck by the way in which he hangs out his coloured stockings from the garret window, which looks straight over the town wall. I will not say that he is acting in concert with the enemy, but he does it daily in spite of all the warnings I have given him. And again to-day, too, he has hung out a blue and red stocking, and it is just possible that the enemy may have remarked it and directed his attacks to that point.'

Tilly had listened with great attention to these words of his clerk, but he said nothing in reply, and dismissed him for that day. Fabian Duft went home delighted, for he thought that he had dug a deep pitfall for his enemy. It was just the hour which the stocking-weaver regularly passed in church. So he betook himself immediately to his neighbour's room, sat down at the loom, and employed himself as usual in minutely measuring and drawing the various portions of it.

Fabian Duft had scarcely quitted the wounded general, when an officer again appeared before him with the announcement that the Swedish King had ventured nearer than ever to the town, but that his horse had been killed under him by a cannon ball. At these tidings the iron countenance of the old Marshal quivered with a scornful joy; and he said, 'We will make it still more comfortable for the Snow King' (thus in mockery he used to name him), 'so that he shall no longer need to approach so near. Summon to me at once the sergeant on duty!'

The sergeant appeared, and Tilly shortly and severely gave his orders. 'Matthias, take six men with you and up at once to the stocking-weaver's house. The burgomaster's servant will accompany you and show you the way. Out of the top window of this house a red and a blue stocking are hanging. Take them, put them round the master stocking-maker's neck, and then hang him up on the town wall. In a quarter of an hour I expect to receive the information that my commands have been executed,

and that the traitor has met with his well-deserved reward.'

The sergeant unhesitatingly acted as he was told to do. Fabian Duft was sitting still immersed in his work before his neighbour's loom; when he heard the clinking spurs and rattling swords of the soldiers coming up the steps, he opened the door with surprise. The sergeant seized him without further ado, and held him fast. One of the soldiers fetched the two stockings down from the loft. The others bound the hands of the cunning schoolmaster behind his back. Notwithstanding all his protestations and resistance, the two stockings were tied round his neck. Then the soldiers dragged him out of the house, and hung him without pity on the town wall of Ingolstadt.

The sergeant was not present at the death of the treacherous schoolmaster. He happened, strangely enough, to be Matthias, Daniel Sardermann's brother. After the death of his father he had, as we know, journeyed far away from home, and at last joined the army. When the Major's servant pointed out to him the stocking-weaver's dwelling, he at once recognised it as his father's house, the home of his childhood. In his brother's chamber so many sad and happy reminiscences of his youth had awoke within him, that he forgot everything else and left the execution of the culprit to his subordinates. Thus he was still standing meditating, full of deep melancholy, in this little room, while the cunning rogue was receiving his well-merited reward without. Then the door opened, and Daniel Sardermann, returning home from the service in church, entered his room. The brothers, though they had not met for so long a time, at once recognised each other, and embraced with deep affection and joy.

During the next three or four days there was so much bustle and turmoil in and round Ingolstadt, that no one heeded what had taken place that evening on the walls—Field-marshal Tilly died that same night, 30 April, 1632, in the arms of the Elector of Bavaria. Fabian Duft's sister preferred quietly to leave the house, which now had such terrible associations for her. She retired into a convent, where many years after she ended her days. But Daniel Sardermann remained in his father's house, and his quiet there was no longer disturbed. Matthias was subsequently wounded at the battle of Nördlingen. As his right arm remained useless after it was healed, he was obliged to give up the military service, and returned to his brother, with whom he lived in peace and concord till his death.

But the people of Ingolstadt wished to preserve some remembrance of those days of war and of the end of the treacherous schoolmaster. They had the culprit with the red and blue stocking round his neck painted on their town wall. The picture, unless quite recently effaced, is still to be seen there. He who sees it hung will think of the Psalmist's words: 'He hath graven and digged up a pit, and is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for others. For his travail shall come upon his own head, and his wickedness shall fall on his own pate. I will give thanks unto the Lord, according to His righteousness: and I will praise the name of the Lord most High.'

J. F. C.



The Sergeant seizing Fabian Duft, the treacherous Schoolmaster.



The Man producing the Warrant to search Captain Nethercoat's Rooms.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Continued from p. 195.)

CHAPTER XXVI.



M^R. MOTTRAM was telegraphed for, and was back at Hill Park by twelve o'clock in a terrible state of fuss and fume, as was only natural when every silver fork and spoon in the establishment had been carried off, and when he was obliged to eat his soup at luncheon with a metal spoon from the kitchen. And Mrs. Mottram arrived an hour later, being convinced that the burglars must have injured her precious Joe, and she could not be content for a day till she had satisfied herself that he was quite sound from top to toe.

The police were busy with their investigations, making every servant in the house, down to little Betty the scullery-maid, look guilty by their suspicious looks and their firm conviction that some one in the house must have been in league with the burglars. Even Martin came in for his share of their suspicions, and if he had not been as anxious as they were to find out the real culprits and to do all he could to help in their discovery, he would have been angry at the questionings and the cross-questionings that ensued, and the doubts that were cast on the truth, or, at any rate, the accuracy of his statements.

'And about such out-of-the-way things, you know, Jack!' Martin said indignantly; 'about things at home here, and about Lance and Captain Nethercoat, and lots of things that can't possibly have anything to do with the matter! They look mighty wise over it and think they have a clue, but so they did over the Carbrook affair, and they haven't made anything of that. There's another fellow come down from Scotland Yard, who, they say, is as sharp as a greyhound on the scent of a burglar, and Mr. Mottram says they say they are sure the plate must be hidden away somewhere not far off, as they couldn't have carried such a load far without being noticed. He won't spare any expense about finding them; it's not so much the loss of the plate, for I don't suppose he'd think twice of going to a shop and ordering as much again, but he's put out that such a thing should have happened to him when he always reckoned himself such a wary old bird.'

It was all deeply interesting, and the boys would have entered into it all with undivided interest if it had not been for Lance being so ill, and Jill, too, being in such a nervous, exhausted condition that Dr. Wilson feared for her almost as much as for Lance, as she had scarcely recovered properly from her former accident, and was in no state to bear the exposure and fright of that night in the ravine. As for Lance, the wound at the side of his head was more serious than the doctor thought at first, and he could not think how it could have been caused by any fall; but it was very certain that if he had lain there all night without any help, as he very easily might

have done, the morning would have found him past all recovery; and the doctor said that if he recovered, which, even now, was very doubtful, he would owe his life, under Providence, to the poor creature in whose dead arms they found him in the early dawn.

'How strange,' Dr. Wilson said, 'that a poor waif, a wandering tramp, without a penny in her pocket, and with nothing about her by which she could be identified, no doubt a friendless outcast, should have been the means of saving the boy's life! She was in the last stage of consumption, and the end was, no doubt, accelerated by privation and exposure.'

'It is very strange altogether,' the doctor went on, examining that cruel cut. 'It looks a great deal more as if it had been a blow struck from behind than the effect of a fall; but what object could there be for any one to do such a thing?'

Not robbery, for he had some money in his pocket and his watch was not gone, and moreover, after they had taken him home, and were moving the poor dead form, a locket slipped down from the woman's dress—a gold locket, bearing the Flower dragon on one side and interlaced initials on the other, and inside, the miniature of a baby face and a curl of dark hair.

'Lance never showed it to us,' Jack said when the doctor brought it in. 'That's him as a little chap. I didn't know that he wore it. I dare say it was his mother's.'

And he put it by the bed where Lance lay in unconsciousness.

Jack had to appear at the inquest which was held that afternoon, and to tell all he knew about the poor woman, which was little enough, and Jill would have had to go, too, if Dr. Wilson had not altogether forbidden it.

The great burglary at Hill Park drew away all the interest from the poor woman's death, which, otherwise, would have been talked about and wondered over for many a day in Shettle, and only Martin, Jack, and Davy, were present, a few days later, when the shabby pauper funeral from the workhouse came to the churchyard, and 'this, our sister,' was laid to rest; still 'our sister,' though she was nameless and friendless, and laid to rest with the same grand and beautiful words as if royal dust were being laid in dust amid a country's mourning.

'Why should we go?' Davy asked with that restless dislike to anything sad or gloomy that some boys have.

'Don't you see?' Jack said; 'she saved Lance's life.'

And so the three boys stood by the grave in Shettle Churchyard among the old Flower monuments which told the family history for many a generation, and thought how sad it was to die like that away from all your own people and be buried among strangers.

But, meanwhile, a new light had been thrown on the burglary that was quite bewildering at first to the boys. On the afternoon after the inquest was over the three boys were together in Bengrove Garden, not quite knowing what to do with themselves, feeling unable to settle down to ordinary employments after all the excitement of the night before.

They had been ignominiously driven out of the house by nurse and told not to come back till tea-

time, which was rather humiliating treatment for heroes, as both Martin and Jack in their inmost hearts felt themselves to be, while even Davy felt a certain reflected lustre about him, though he had not taken an active part in the affair.

'I wonder if Captain Nethercoat has come back,' said Jack. 'Did he say what train he would come down by?'

'No; but he only spoke of running up to town, and he had no luggage that I could see.'

'Shall we go up to the mill and see? He'll be awfully sorry to hear about Lance.'

'And I expect he'll want to hear all about the robbery, and I should like just to ask him if he saw anything more of the old woman with the basket of eggs. The more I think of it the more queer it seems; she really looked so awfully like that man who was with Captain Nethercoat yesterday. But, of course, that's only a fancy likeness; but I wonder if the Captain noticed it.'

So the three boys set out for the mill, the late exciting events having taken off the edge of their dislike to the Captain and thrown the little episode about the pretended sketches quite into the background. At the turning to the mill they saw a man standing near the corner; he was quite a stranger to them, a small, trim-looking man, who seemed quite absorbed in tying his shoe-string with great care. The boys would not have noticed him in other circumstances, but as they were, at present, keen on the discovery of burglars, they favoured him with a good look as they went by, which look was returned by blinking light eyes between sandy lashes, which, perhaps, saw farther into a brick wall in spite of their blinking.

But as he was very clearly not a burglar, the boys thought no more of him till he overtook them just before they reached the mill.

'Excuse me, gentlemen,' he said, 'but is this Park Mill?'

'Yes,' said Martin, 'this is it.'

'And are there lodgings to be let here?'

'Yes, generally; but Captain Nethercoat has them now.'

'Has he taken them for long?'

'I don't know; you'd better ask him,' said Martin, not quite pleased at the questioning, having had enough of that sort of thing in the morning.

'If he's at home,' said Jack; 'but he went up to London this morning, and we don't know if he's back yet.'

'Indeed? Is he coming back soon?'

And then, almost in spite of himself, Martin was telling the stranger of Captain Nethercoat's departure by the early train from Woodleigh.

This man seemed to have a curious power of drawing information out of people; perhaps it was from the intense interest those strange, light eyes seemed to take in what he said, even in the old woman with the egg basket and the scar on her forehead showing when her bonnet was pushed back.

He gave a slight movement as if of aggravation when Martin described this scar, but the next minute gave a long, low whistle, at the sound of which a man immediately appeared from the bushes close by.

'It's no go, Johnson,' the man said, while the boys

watched and listened in amazement, 'they've got clean off by the morning train from Woodleigh as easy as anything. He's a cute one and no mistake. I thought as soon as ever I heard of the Carbrook robbery that the Cracker had a hand in it.'

'But no one went by that train,' Jack interrupted, 'but Captain Nethercoat and the old woman.'

'They wouldn't have gone if I'd been there,' said the man.

'What do you mean?' asked Martin, turning quite dizzy with the sudden light that was breaking in on the mystery. 'What do you mean?'

'Why, that two of the biggest burglars of the time have slipped through our fingers.'

'But Captain Nethercoat?'

'Alias Colonel Hunt, alias Ben Paget, alias the Cracker, and as many more aliases as you like.'

'But the old woman —'

'No more an old woman than I am. I'd know that scar of his among a million. Why, he got it in a desperate tussle with the police, and he did for the poor fellow who gave it him and a good many more in his time, I'll warrant. Well, it's no use hoping that either of them will show their faces about here just yet, though the swag must be hidden somewhere, and they'll come after it sooner or later, and then will be our chance. Fine day, sir.' This to the miller, who was leaning over the railings by the mill, with dusty, bare arms crossed, watching the party come up the road. 'Is the Captain at home?'

'No, nor ain't been in since last evening. Guess he's after them burglars as have been housebreaking at the Park.'

'Ah! I shouldn't wonder!' said the man, adding under his breath, 'set a thief to catch a thief. May we step into his room for a minute?'

The old miller scratched his ear reflectively.

'He don't much hold with strangers in his room. He ain't a partider sort of gent, but he don't like even my missus turning about his things, as is a terrible one for tidying up, and always have abeen.'

But it appeared that Captain Nethercoat's feelings in this particular were not to be consulted, for the man produced a warrant and proceeded to search his rooms, and the mill generally, with the greatest minuteness, leaving the boys and the miller outside, exchanging their very bewildered ideas, while the old woman followed the searchers from room to room, wringing her hands and crying and declaring that Captain Nethercoat would never forgive her when he found all his things turned topsy-turvy, as were the nicest quietest gent as ever breathed, and never one as grumbled or found fault were it ever so.

There was not much gained from the search; the detective did not hope to find any of the plunder there, this he concluded would be hidden elsewhere, but he hoped to find something to connect him with the burglary, and in this he was disappointed, till, much to Mrs. Jones' indignation, he raked out some pieces of torn paper that had been swept under the grate, and, fitting them together, found the plan of the house which Martin had thought so like Lord Carbrook's, and which Captain Nethercoat had declared to be his brother's house in Yorkshire, while the boys, outside with the miller, chanced on a more satisfactory piece of evidence, something which had



The Little Loaf.

come up with the tangle on the mill wheel, and which, though soaked and spoiled by being in the water, was clearly to be identified as a jeweller's case that had once held a bracelet, and on the top of which the Carbrook crest could still be distinguished.

But this was all that could be found, and though the following day the water was run off the mill-pond and the stream above and below carefully dragged, nothing but another empty case was found; and when, after some days had passed, the plate and jewels still remained undiscovered, most people made

up their minds that the burglars had managed to take it away with them, though Martin was witness that, besides that very heavy egg-basket, neither Captain Nethercoat nor the old woman had anything with them.

And, meanwhile, the only two people who might have thrown some light on the matter were not in a condition to do so, for Lance was slowly struggling back to life, with still dim consciousness and feeble memory, and such weak and shaken nerves that no excitement or questioning was allowed; while Jill



Alexis reading to his Grandfather.

had been carried off by Mrs. Mottram to Brighton, and not allowed to talk or, if it could be helped, think of that dreadful night, which seemed to have taken all the spirit out of her, and to have turned her into the most nervous, timid little creature, who was afraid of her own shadow and trembled at a sound, and could not endure to be left alone or in the dark for a minute; but then, as Jack always maintained, 'she had shown enough pluck that night to last to the end of her life.'

(Concluded in our next.)

THE LITTLE LOAF.

ONCE when there was a famine throughout the land, a rich man sent for the twenty poorest children in the town to come to his house, and said to them, 'In the basket there is a little loaf for each of you. Take it and come back to me every day at the same hour, till the good God sends us better times.'

Eagerly did the hungry children fall upon the basket, and quarrelled and struggled for the bread, because each wished to have the best and largest; at last they went away without having even

thanked the good gentleman. But Gretchen, a poorly but neatly-dressed little maiden, remained standing modestly in the distance: then she took the smallest loaf which alone was left in the basket, gratefully she kissed the rich gentleman's hand, and went quickly home.

Next day the children were just as ill-behaved, and the poor timid Gretchen received this time a loaf which was scarcely half the size of the other. But when she came home and her sick mother cut the loaf open, many new silver pieces of money fell rattling and shining out of it.

The mother was not a little alarmed, and said, 'Take the money at once back to the good gentleman, for it certainly got into the dough by accident. Be quick, Gretchen! be quick!'

But when the little girl came to the rich man and gave him her mother's message, he said kindly, 'No, no, my child, it was no mistake. I had the silver pieces put into the smallest loaf to reward you. Remain always as contented, peaceable, self-denying, and grateful as you are now. She who would rather take the smallest loaf than quarrel for the larger ones will obtain far richer blessings than even if money were baked into the loaf. Go home now, and greet your good mother very kindly from me.'

ARAB ODDITIES.

AN Arab on entering a house removes his shoes, but not his hat. He mounts his horse upon the right side, while his wife milks the cow on the left side. In writing a letter he puts nearly all his compliments on the outside. With him the point of a pin is its head, whilst its head is made its heel. His head must be wrapped up warm, even in summer, while his feet may well enough go naked in winter. Every article of merchandise which is liquid he weighs, but he measures wheat, barley, and a few other articles. He reads and writes from right to left. He eats scarcely anything for breakfast, about as much for dinner; but after the work of the day is done he sits down to a hot meal swimming in oil, or in boiled butter. His sons eat with him, but the females of his house wait till his lordship is done. He rides a donkey when travelling, his wife walking behind. He laughs at the idea of walking in the street with his wife, or of ever vacating his seat for a woman. He knows no use for chairs, tables, knives, forks, or even spoons unless they are wooden ones. Bedsteads, bureaus, and fireplaces may be placed in the same category. If he be an artisan, he does his work sitting, perhaps using his feet to hold what his hands are engaged upon. He drinks cold water with a spoon, but never bathes in it unless his home is on the seashore. He is rarely seen drunk, has little affection for his kindred, little curiosity, and no imitation, no wish to improve his mind, no desire to surround himself with the comforts of life.

A MAN, when tried for stealing a pair of boots, said he merely took the boots in joke. It was found that he was captured with them forty yards from the place he had taken them from. The judge said he had *carried the joke too far*.

A WEAVER'S APPRENTICE.

A CERTAIN Dean Tucker was one day strolling through a village, either in Gloucestershire or Somersetshire, when he carelessly entered the shop of a poor weaver. Lying there he saw an old Greek Testament, dirty and well thumbed.

'How comes this here? Who reads this book?' asked the Dean.

'Sir,' said the weaver, 'my son is always poring over books of that kind.'

'Let me see him,' said the Dean.

The lad was called, and on examination was found to have a fair knowledge of Greek and Latin. By appointment he waited upon the Dean next day, and was introduced to several wealthy persons of the neighbourhood. They were so struck with the lad's talent and industry, that a sum of money was subscribed to secure his further education. The father wisely allowed Dean Tucker to guide the boy's future; and he was sent to school at Gloucester, whence he went to Oxford. There the weaver's apprentice became the renowned Professor White, Canon of Christ Church, and Professor of Hebrew and Arabic.

A. R. B.



ALEXIS AND HIS GRANDFATHER.

ALEXIS LA COUR was a French boy, about ten years of age when he left his native village, and went to live with his grandfather Pierre, a poor goatherd, who lived in a cottage in the Vosges Mountains. Very poor was old Pierre except for his flock of goats, and very lonely since his wife's death, two years before little Alexis came to him; but not too poor nor too old to feel compassion for his orphan grandson, and to adopt him on the death of his parents. It was a strange home for the little boy to go to, accustomed as he had been to live in the plains; for the goatherd's cottage stood at a great height above the valley, and yet, high as it was, the mountain peaks towered far above the tiny dwelling, their summits covered with a fleecy mantle of snow. Alexis was in no danger of feeling dull at his grandfather's, for he and Joseph the servant-man had always plenty of work to do. The goats had to be tended and led to new pasture, cheese and butter had to be made, wood had to be cut down in the forest, and carried home, while many another little duty had to be attended to within the cottage between sunrise and sunset. Nor were his studies quite overlooked; for every evening he used to stand by his grandfather's side, and read to him out of a large old-fashioned book, which had been the lesson-book of his own father in his youthful days. These evenings by old Pierre's chair were happy times for the young Alexis, who loved to listen to stories of long ago, when his grandfather had been a soldier fighting for his country's freedom from tyranny and oppression.

Joseph the servant-man was a great favourite with the boy, who gained from him so much useful know-

ledge regarding the life of a mountaineer that before he had been two years with his grandfather he was able of himself to lead out the goats, cut and stack wood, and even make a pair of wooden shoes for his own or his grandfather's use. Altogether, these were happy times, and it seems sad to think that such times cannot last always, but true it is that those peaceful days in the goatherd's cottage were soon to be rudely interrupted.

It was winter time, and a more severe winter than had been experienced in the mountains for many years past; the snow lay deeply piled in the narrow gorges and hung in great masses on the cliffs far above the mountain cottage. Old Pierre would sometimes stand at the door and watch these great snow-fields overhead, muttering to himself his fears that a sudden thaw would greatly endanger his little dwelling. But we know by experience that men will cling to their homes in spite of apprehended dangers of this kind, and so it was with old Pierre. He and Joseph both saw the danger, but both resolved to take their chance of it, while Alexis, in his boyish experience, neither saw any danger nor felt any anxiety. But the awful catastrophe came at last. A fresh west wind had been blowing for some days, the snow began to drip, and ominous noises were heard during the silence of night. At last early one morning, when the three inhabitants of the cottage were still asleep, an awful rattling crash roused them in a moment. In silent terror they grasped one another's hands. There was no need of words, even Alexis knew what had happened: the avalanche had slid downwards with a rush, and their little cottage was buried underneath the overwhelming mass of snow.

But worse things still had happened, for while all three were alive, which was a cause of deep thankfulness, poor Pierre had not escaped without injury, a falling piece of timber having struck him on the back and deprived him of the use of his limbs. His groans were terrible to hear, and while Alexis brought water to refresh his parched mouth, Joseph contrived to free him of the broken timber, and to arrange him somewhat comfortably in bed. Further examination revealed the terrible fact that the back part of the house where the goats were kept was entirely buried, with all the poor animals except two, who had contrived to escape, and were now scrambling through the rubbish towards their master's side. The front part of the cottage being the strongest had resisted the weight of the falling snow, which, though deeply piled above it, had not broken down the roof. In these two front rooms, then, the three poor inhabitants of the cottage found themselves imprisoned; they were in darkness and in silence, save for the groans of poor Pierre, and the bleating of the two goats, who, with the instinct of their kind, were quite aware that something disastrous had occurred.

Poor Alexis! how terrified he was when he first realised the terrible position in which he and his companions were placed; but it is no good for any one of us to sit helplessly down to bemoan our misfortunes, and the boy was soon summoned by Joseph to help him in making arrangements for their well-being, until the time should come (if it ever came) when some neighbours from the valley below might be able to come to their assistance. The first thing to be

done was to secure the two goats and make them as comfortable as possible, as upon the milk which they gave old Pierre would have to subsist until rescue came. As for Alexis and himself, Joseph considered that milk would be too dainty a diet for them, but there was a large cheese and a barrel of rye meal upon which they must contrive to live. Fortunately they were well supplied with fodder for the two animals. Alexis held the lump while Joseph milked the goats and carefully laid it aside for his master's use, and in this and various other useful occupations the following few days slowly passed away.

When their captivity had now endured for a week without any rescue party having sought them out, Joseph became very anxious. The goats were not thriving in their captivity, their milk would probably soon fail, and then what was to become of his old master, whose strength was already declining? He would sit for hours together fondling one of the poor animals, an especial favourite of his; but when Joseph appealed to him on any subject, old Pierre had no advice to offer. Not only was his bodily strength declining, but his mind was becoming enfeebled; in short, it was quite evident that, unless speedily rescued, he could not long survive. What was to be done? The worthy servant-man in much anxiety contrived, with the help of Alexis, to clear away a little of the encumbering snow from the roof of the cottage, and then the welcome discovery was made that the great body of the avalanche had slid still further downwards into a deep ravine, and that which still lay piled on their roof was rapidly melting away. Doubtless their neighbours in the valley would soon be able to come to their assistance. But still the weeks wore on and no succour came. One evening, after Alexis had assisted Joseph to bake rye bread and attend to the goats, he heard his grandfather faintly calling to him from the other chamber. The boy went immediately, but was grieved in his heart to find old Pierre much cast down in spirit, saying that he felt the hand of death upon him, and requesting Alexis to write a letter to his dictation. 'You have an uncle, my boy,' he said, 'your mother's brother, in Auvergne; if ever you are rescued from this sad captivity, I know Joseph will see that you are taken there. I shall be gone long before then; but do not forget me, Alexis, and remember wherever you may be placed to do your duty to God and to man.'

Many more kind and affectionate words were said by the poor goatherd, while the young Alexis listened with a sad heart. He had already lost his early home and had seen his beloved parents laid in the grave, and now was he really about to part from his beloved grandfather, and once more be sent away among strangers? or was he, perhaps, doomed to perish along with his two companions in this snow-covered prison? That same night, while Joseph and Alexis watched by the sick-bed, old Pierre quietly expired, after thanking his two careful attendants for all the kindness they had bestowed upon him. It seemed a sad death, and yet a sadder burial was to follow, for, after consulting with his young companion, Joseph resolved to dig his grave in the little chamber where he had died, while he and the boy would retire to the other apartment, which they must share with their four-footed companions!



Alexis praying at the Grave of his Grandfather.

Not long after this sad event, and when the severity of winter had passed away, the rescue party appeared, bringing with them supplies of food and wine, very welcome to the poor prisoners who had supported life so long on such meagre fare. We need not further pursue the history of Alexis La Cour, who, according to his grandfather's directions, was taken to Auvergne, where he became a vine-dresser,

and lived for many happy years. But before he left the ruined cottage among the Vosges Mountains, where he had spent two happy years, he knelt by the grave of old Pierre, and prayed to God that grace might be given to him to do his duty, and to remember the example set before him by his grandfather, the old goatherd of the Vosges Mountains.

D. B. McKEAN.



Jill finding a Silver Spoon with the Mottram's Crest on it.

GILLY FLOWER.

(Concluded from page 205.)

CHAPTER XXVII.



T was the end of October when Jill came home; Jack and Davy had gone back to Sherley; yes, and Martin, too, had gone back to Radbourne, much to his delight. A distant cousin of Mr. Flower's had died and left some money; not very much, but enough to make the boys' schooling no longer a matter of anxiety, and also to make possible what Dr.

Wilson, in the kindness of his heart, would not advise, because he knew it would be quite out of the question that Mr. Flower and Jill should go away to a warmer climate for the winter.

The very prospect seemed to have done Mr. Flower good, or else it was the lightening of the heavy load of anxiety as to ways and means, for he came to meet Jill when the Mottram's carriage brought her from the station, looking quite like his old self, and, actually, when thanks and good-byes to kind old Mrs. Mottram had been said, and the door was closed, he took Gilly Flower up in his arms as he had not done for many a day, and carried her into the library, and she sat on his knees with her arms round his neck, with the glad tears of joy, at coming home again into his arms, and feeling those arms stronger, so dimming her eyes that it was some time before she noticed there was any one else in the room.

'Why, you have not even spoken to Lance!' Mr. Flower said at last. And then she saw in the corner of the sofa by the fire a poor, brown shadow of Lance, with all the light-heartedness and brightness gone out of him, and with great, sad, pathetic, dark eyes, that brought back to her mind in a moment the cottage in the ravine and the dead woman's face.

'Oh, Lance!' she said, 'I'm so sorry! Are you better?'

'Wonderfully better,' Mr. Flower answered for him, 'only he and I have both been wanting Gilly Flower to look after us. He's going to stop with us this winter; he's an older traveller than you and me, Jill, and he's going to act courier and take care of us, and speak the lingo, as Jack says, and prevent the hotel-keepers from cheating us, and make up to us for not having the boys at Christmas. He's going to do a great deal for us, you see, Jill, and I don't know what we can do in return—— Why, Lance, old man, what is it?'

For Lance's face was covered with his trembling hands, to hide the big tears springing in his eyes.

'I owe you everything,' he said; 'I never could do enough in return.'

'Why, Gilly Flower!' Mr. Flower said, and his eyes, too, had a moisture in them, and his voice a little uncertain tone; 'you have made us both as silly as yourself. Lance and I were quite sensible before you came. He offered himself as courier, and I accepted him as my youngest son. I told him I was sorry I could not offer him

a place higher in the family, as I knew Jack and Davy would object, and as I had a perfect little fury of a daughter, who could not allow any one near Jack, so I thought he would be safer as the youngest. So you must be very kind to your little brother, Jill.'

It was such a great, long fellow who was standing in front of Mr. Flower, and at whom Jill was looking rather timidly, and Mr. Flower's words made them all laugh, even with the tears in their eyes.

How changed Lance was! He was still quite an invalid, and very much tyrannised over by nurse, with whom he had always been a great favourite, and who knew nothing of his misdoings, and always maintained that his accident was somehow the result of Master Jack leading him into mischief, 'as had better a hundred times have been born a monkey at once as is always up to his tricks.'

Jill wondered how much Lance remembered of that night when he opened his eyes and looked straight up into the eyes looking down at him with such wonderful tenderness; she wondered if he was thinking of it when he sat silently, sometimes for hours, over the fire, looking into its red hollows and caverns, and fingering a locket which he wore on his watch chain, and which she never remembered to have seen before.

'May I look at it?' she asked once; and he opened it and showed her the miniature inside of a baby, and a lock of hair.

'Is that you?'

He nodded.

'And your hair?'

'Yes;' and then he added with an effort, 'It was my mother's.'

'Are those her initials outside?'

'Yes. E. F., Eleanor Flower.'

He spent most of his time brooding over the fire, except when he could do anything for Mr. Flower; and Jill, rather jealously, relinquished now and then her right of reading or writing for father when she saw the pleasure it gave this youngest brother of hers, and how it seemed to brighten him up out of the languor and depression in which he was generally sunk.

The doctor said he ought to go out and get as much air as possible; but it was evidently a great effort to him, and he took advantage of every excuse to avoid going, and when the day was bright, and he could not conjure up any threatening clouds into the sky, he preferred to walk up and down the garden path, or round and round the drive, instead of going outside the gate.

But one day, when Jill was setting out for a walk, he came out after her, and instead of turning back at the gate as he generally did, he asked if he might come too. Now Jill had two objects in view, and she was not altogether anxious for Lance's company for either. One was the churchyard, where she wanted to find the grave where that poor woman had been laid, and she had picked a few flowers to put on the mound.

She had asked nurse and Mary Anne if they knew where the grave was, but they neither of them could tell her, and nurse told her not to trouble her head

about a poor tramp, who, no doubt, was no better than she should be.

But Jill was not to be discouraged, and she filled a little basket with the few blossoms that autumn had left, pale monthly roses, and the dear, old-fashioned, homely Michaelmas daisies, and golden marigolds, and set off, knowing that the old sexton would tell her where she lay.

When Lance joined her she thought she had better give up this object; and her other one, which was the ravine, she felt would not do with him either, so she told him she was going to see her old governess, Miss Bridgeman, and say good-bye to her, a visit which she had not intended to pay for another day or two.

She fancied that Lance looked a little disappointed.

'Where does she live?' he asked.

'Just beyond the church,' she answered; and he went on in silence.

But when they reached the churchyard he stopped and looked at her wistfully as if he could not find words to express what he wanted to say; and with a sudden impulse Jill said,—

'Lance, I want to find a grave here. Do you mind coming in?'

'Her grave?'

'Yes.'

The old sexton was near the gate as they passed in, and he pointed out to Jill the new-turfed grave.

'It's all among your people, Miss Jill,' he said; 'there's hardly one in that corner as ain't a Flower, more or less; but we're getting cramped for room and has to use up stray bits, and, please God, none of the family 'll need a place there yet awhile.'

And then Jill and Lance went on to the grave, and Jill opened her basket and began laying the flowers on the grass, but stopped and held out the basket to Lance.

'You do it,' she said; 'she saved your life.'

His face was working strangely, but he took the flowers and laid them down, and then suddenly threw himself by the grave with his face downwards in a storm of passionate sobs.

'Oh, Lance, don't cry! don't!' said little Jill: 'she did not suffer any pain. She looked so pleased and smiling.'

But she could not get him to stop crying or raise his face, nor do anything to comfort him; so she sat down by his side, touching him now and then with a timid little hand and saying, 'Poor Lance! poor Lance!'

Perhaps she could not have found a better way, for by-and-by his sobs quieted, and he raised his head and whispered,—

'Jill, do you know who she was? She was my mother.'

After that it was the most natural thing in the world that they should go on together to the ravine for Jill to show him where he had been found senseless, and where he would have been found dead but for the loving arms that had held him and bound up his wound.

'Jill,' he said in a whisper, as they stood there under the trees among the thick fallen leaves, 'I was going to tell Martin. I had found out more than

they meant me to, and I tried to get to Martin to warn him, but they overtook me and then—'

'Oh, Lance, don't think of it, it's all past now!'

They went down, silently, through the fern, all turned to gold and crimson and rich brown by the touch of Autumn's frosty finger; the brambles were gorgeous in their bright tints, mocking at the trees above, many of which stood bare and leafless Lance and Jill went hand-in-hand; there was something solemn and dreadful to them in the place, and they were each glad to feel a warm living hand holding theirs.

The door of the cottage was not locked, and in the inner room the heaped-up fern still seemed to show the pressure of the dead form that had held the living boy in her arms, and, still holding Lance's hand, Jill told in awestruck whispers, as if the solemn presence of death were still there, how happy and peaceful the dead face had looked, as if she were satisfied at last.

The short October day was drawing in as they came out of the cottage, and a mist was rising from the stream and hanging in wreathes and folds about the valley and under the trees, stirring every now and then in some current of air, like the softly floating garments of some spiritual presence.

'Let us make haste home,' Lance said with a shudder.

But Jill hung back a minute, looking through the little side-window in the front room, from whence she had watched the men at their mysterious occupation that night—a scene which she had grown to think was only a frightened fancy of that terrible night. The fagots still were there, leaning against the bank, but one of them had fallen, knocked down by some of the high winds and rough weather of the past month.

'Come, Jill,' said Lance.

But an impulse she could not resist made her go to that fallen fagot, and then she gave a cry which brought Lance to her side in a moment, for she knew that what she had seen was no dream but a reality, for there, half hidden in the grass and covered from the sight of passers-by by the fagots, was a silver spoon with the showy crest of the Mottram's on it.

'Oh, Lance, it is all there! every bit of it, salvers and cups and spoons! I saw them put it there, only, when I began to tell Jack, he said I was frightened and fancied it. Oh, how nice to give it all back to Mr. Mottram! Oh, Lance, how we used to talk, Jack and me, of the plate that the ghost buried, and how we'd find it some day! but fancy finding the Mottram's plate instead! How I wish Jack was here!'

She had begun with all her strength, which was not very much, to pull away the fagots, and I think she had an idea of digging it out then and there, and carrying it straight up to Hill Park and pouring it out at Mr. Mottram's feet; but Lance knew better how little they were, either of them, capable of.

'Come home,' he said, 'and let us tell Uncle Martin all about it.'

And so she did, very unwillingly, but was obliged to confess that it was almost as much as she could do to carry herself home; and they both had to undergo a severe scolding from nurse for stopping out 'in the



Jill and Lance at the newly-turfed Grave.

nasty, damp, raw evening, enough to give them both their deaths.

And next day Mr. Flower took Jill up to Hill Park with her precious spoon clasped in her hands; and she told her story and showed the place where she had seen the men at work; and it was not long before a couple of men with spades proved her story true, and drew out the sacks full of silver tarnished and dim, but otherwise uninjured, and without one spoon or fork missing.

The old butler nearly had a fit in his delight at its recovery, and was ready to worship Jill for having been the means of finding it; and Joe's mouth threatened to remain permanently open with astonishment and admiration of what he always maintained was Jill's magical power, which had found out what had baffled those wonderfully cunning detectives from Scotland Yard.

Lance would not come that day into the ravine though Jill tried hard to make him, and, both then and for long afterwards he could not bear to speak of Captain Nethercoat or hear of the burglary; but as Jill was going he called her back.

'Jill,' he said, 'my head gets all puzzled and confused when I try to remember, but tell them to look further along the bank, near that stump where there's a lot of ivy and brambles trailing about. I don't know if there's anything there, but they may as well look.'

Jill forgot all about this in the excitement and

pleasure of seeing the Mottram plate dug out, but she remembered just as they were coming away, and found the place that Lance had described, and begged them to turn up the earth there.

And that was how Lady Carbrook got back her diamonds, and she used to tell the story of how they had lain for two months buried in a bank, and how they had been found at last by a little girl.

And to Jill came the handsome reward that had been offered for the recovery of the jewels, though she always declared that Lance ought to have had it; but he would not let her give him even the smallest present out of it, and the only thing she could do was the placing of a little white cross by that unnamed grave with the text that father chose on the step—'She loved much.' And I don't think, if Jill had searched all the world over, she could have given Lance a present he would have valued more.

And Jill's present to Martin, Jack and Davy was to bring them all three to the south of France to spend their Christmas holidays with father and her and Lance, and that was as much a present to herself and father as to them. It was a very happy time, though that ungrateful Jack scoffed at the blue skies and warm air, and declared that the 'parley voos' did not know what a Christmas was, without snow or holly, or skating or anything. In fact, all that winter Jack maintained that there was nothing jolly to be found out of England except father and Gilly Flower.

all



THE TALITH.

DO you know how the Jewish children pray? Well, they do not kneel or join their hands together as we do, but they stand, and put round their shoulders a fringed garment called 'Talith.' This is used during devotion by all Jews in every part of the world, and the pattern is always the same. On the four corners there are fringes, which are placed there in obedience to the command of Moses, that they should put fringes on their garments: the fringe being considered of the greatest importance by the Jews, as

they are told in the Book of Numbers that when they look upon it they are to 'remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them.'

Now when the Jew boy is five years old he begins to learn his Bible, and his parents provide him with a little Talith, and this he puts on every time he says his prayers. He first arranges it round his shoulders, and at last he covers his head with it, in token of submission to his Creator. Besides this, when he is thirteen, he has a little box containing some sentences of the Jewish law bound round his forehead by a strip

of leather, and this is called the 'Tephilim:' but he cannot wear this before he is thirteen. This has been done since the days of Moses by the whole Jewish nation. And every morning when they rise up, and every evening ere they lie down to rest, they say, 'Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God, the Lord, is One!'^{*} A. R.

THE KING'S GODCHILD.

From the German of Otilie Wildermath.

CHAPTER I.



THE King's godchild. That sounds very grand, and my readers begin to think of a cradle of some choice wood, a silken bed, and gossamer curtains, beneath which, in embroidered frock and delicate lace cap, a tender infant is slumbering.

But the King's godchild whom I knew was by no means so luxuriously brought up. He had, indeed, when

he first saw the light of the world, a roof over his head of the most beautiful azure blue, higher than that of a royal throne-room; but the floor was not by any means so magnificent; his mother, too, had wrapped the child in old rags, and his cradle was a broken wheelbarrow without a wheel. So it turned out that this boy, although he really became the King's godchild, was the son of Mouse-Peter and Ragged Madeline.

Whence the aforesaid Peter came, and why he had not got on better in the world, are questions which we are not able to answer.

As long as we can remember, Mouse-Peter and his whole family appeared to be the living picture of poverty: the children's clothes looked as if they had never been properly put on them, they seemed to hang on by accident, and there were so many children! The mother must, indeed, have been somewhat to blame for the deplorable condition of her offspring: she was not wrongly named Ragged Madeline: she appeared to have spent very little time during her life in washing and stitching. 'It is easy enough for rich people to be clean and tidy,' she was fond of saying; and yet at least she might have had any quantity of water for nothing.

The business to which Mouse-Peter owed his name was that of catching moles. In those days people did not think, as they do now, that moles are very useful, respectable animals; they were held to be mischievous beasts, who ate up the grass roots, spoiled the soil of gardens and meadows by the heaps which they threw up. So Mouse-Peter generally received the reward of a groschen for every mole that he caught. He also buried pots in the ground in which to catch field-mice; he laid traps for martens, and caught weasels whenever he could; it was rumoured, too, that in winter he put snares for the hares who ran out of the wood; but the gamekeeper

must not know this, for it is forbidden, and had he discovered it Mouse-Peter would have found his way to prison, for as to fining him that could not have been done, for he had nothing at all.

But Mouse-Peter's chief occupation was that of gooseherd, and that was not a bad post. In spring, when the geese were first driven out, he received a pound of bread for each goose, and every Saturday, so long as his term of keeper to the geese lasted, half a kreuzer for each goose was paid to him as wages. As there were about five hundred geese in the town, and they had to be looked after from Lady-Day to the Feast of SS. Simon and Jude, that is for about thirty weeks, it was a considerable sum of money, and makes a tidy little sum to calculate, for those of our readers who are fond of arithmetic.

For one person it would have been quite enough to live on, especially for a woman who could add to it by her needle; but for a whole household, in which a fresh baby screamed every year, it was but short commons. No one grudged Mouse-Peter his modest post; people said, indeed, it was a calling only fit for women; but as his figure was somewhat bent and crippled, and not fitted for many other kinds of work, he was allowed to continue the business.

But children multiplied, poverty became greater, order and cleanliness decreased, and Mrs. Mouse-Peter deserved the nick-name of Ragged Madeline more than she had ever done. Mouse-Peter would not exactly send his children to beg; here and there a kind neighbour would give them a piece of bread of her own accord; but it was very annoying to people to have these poor children always about them, and at last no one could be found to give the family a lodging any longer.

The quarter's term for which Mouse-Peter had taken his rooms was up; in vain did he run from house to house to find another lodging. His requirements were modest enough: he did not ask for a pleasant lodging with six rooms and a garden if possible. No, Mouse-Peter would have been quite content with one room with a little off-set, though it had been just under the roof.

But even that could not be found. 'We have no room,' was the answer everywhere to the poor man's humble request. 'I want my rooms for myself now,' or 'My wife's sister is soon coming to lodge with us,' in short it was 'No' everywhere; and when his back was turned the remark was somewhat as follows, 'We cannot have such a set of ragamuffins here, six children, and such a dirty lot! It has been said that they steal, and certainly when people have nothing, it often ends in their helping themselves.' In short, Mouse-Peter found no lodging.

His wife wept at home, and the children cried all in turn because their mother cried.

People appeared to them terribly cruel and hard-hearted. Peter and his wife did not reflect that they were partly themselves to blame for their wretched condition; for they had founded a household without any means of properly supporting a family, and then because the wife by her foolish negligence had allowed her family to get so ragged and miserable that no one could indeed be expected to take them as lodgers. But this never struck Peter or his wife. They were only angry with the hard-hearted neigh-

^{*}The Hebrew inscription on the doorpost in the drawing.

hours. The wife suggested, 'Perhaps we shall find a shelter in the poor-house.' But Peter said stoutly, 'No poor-house for me; I won't have anything to do with the people there. I know where we will go.' And Mouse-Peter went out with his family under the big lime-tree on the sheep-meadow.

The goose-meadow would have been a better domain for Peter as he was a gooseherd; but the goose-meadow was a steep slope just outside the old town wall, where a good deal of brushwood grew and two little withered plum-trees; below it flowed a brook which was comfortable and pleasant for the geese, but for human beings there was no sort of refuge in any part of it except a little sheltered spot just under the town wall, where the gooseherd could take refuge in wet weather.

But the sheep-meadow was a tolerably level, open space, in the midst of which stood a huge old lime-tree, whose trunk three men could barely span, and whose broad branches afforded a sheltering roof for the homeless who took refuge beneath it.

Under this lime-tree, Mouse-Peter, his wife, and his children, now took up their abode, bringing with them their wretched furniture, to the great amusement of all the idle boys of the town. Fortunately this took place in midsummer, and it was a very fine, warm summer. It looked far pleasanter under the tree than in a dirty, close room, as Peter arranged his dwelling, setting down a couple of rickety chairs and a worm-eaten table beside the tree, and erecting behind it a stone fireplace; but on the side where the branches hung thickest came the bedsteads, one large and two small ones for the whole family.

With a sort of fierce delight did Peter, now that he had once made up his mind to it, set to work. Little Peter and Michael, his two eldest, eagerly helped to bring up their small possessions. Matters already looked a great deal better than they could ever have imagined. Jacob and Fritz toddled about with delight, carrying together a little broken wheelbarrow and a Noah's ark without a roof which had once been given to them, leading along also little ragged Johnny. Christopher, the smallest of all, the mother carried.

She alone was not in good spirits: she felt that it was a calamity and a shame that they should not, like honest Christian folk, have a roof over their heads, but be obliged to live like gipsies, under a tree. She wept as she made a fire on the new hearth and prepared some porridge with the milk which the landlady had given her on parting.

With great pleasure, when it was ready, did Mouse-Peter's family sit down to their meal in the open air. They would have had more spectators than the king, when he holds an open table, had not their father broken a withered branch off the lime-tree, and with it driven away all the uninvited sightseers.

The Mayor's wife in the little town was just then newly furnishing her bedroom, in which was a splendid bed, with snow-white curtains and red hangings. The good-natured lady rejoiced the heart of poor Ragged Madeline by giving her her old curtains of red and white stripes, a magnificent contribution to the new household, when Peter had fastened it artistically to the branch of the tree so that it concealed the sleeping apartment. They had

warm beds, though in rather ragged coverlets, for during the whole summer they were able to collect the geese's feathers.

The children were happy in their new abode, and gambolled merrily about in the open air, but Madeline would no longer show herself. When, after a few weeks' time, the boys ran jumping about in the town, shouting, 'We have another little brother!' many kindly people came out, and Madeline received from them good soup, as well as clothes and linen for the poor baby—more, perhaps, than if she had been living under a roof in the town.

The town council now decided that as the evenings were becoming cooler, these poor folk could no longer be allowed to live out in the open air; such a thing was a disgrace for strangers to see if they came into the place, and asked if it was the custom here to dwell under trees as among the savages? So a room at last was cleared out for them in the poor-house, and Mouse-Peter's family once more came beneath a roof, but not till the new little brother had spent the eight first days of his life beneath the green boughs, above which extended the lofty arch of heaven.

Now that this seventh child happened to be a boy, was considered as a great piece of good luck by the poor people. In this part of the country it had, from very ancient times, been the custom that each father to whom seven living sons were born in succession, had the right to ask the King to be godfather to the seventh. This privilege originated in the days of the Crusades and other great wars, when it was considered a special good fortune to possess a great many sons.

The King himself, indeed, heard very little about such godchildren, the matter was simply settled by the proper authorities, with his Majesty's consent. The name of the King was entered in the church register as godfather, and the fortunate father of the seven boys received a louis d'or as a christening present for his youngest. Further the King did not trouble himself about such godchildren, at least he did nothing for them. But a louis d'or all at once is a handsome sum for such poor people, and by Mouse-Peter and his wife it was received with great delight. They held a christening feast, such as had not been done for any of the other children; the Mayor's wife added a large and splendid cake; in her newly-furnished room at home slept a sweet little girl in her cradle, she needed no king for her godfather, she had grandmother and aunts and friends enough who welcomed her into life.

Had not little William—he received in baptism the name of his royal godfather—brought with him the prospect of the valuable christening gift, he would not, indeed, have been so heartily welcomed, and the King, too, could not boast much of his godchild. The six elder little Mouse-Peters, indeed—Peter, Michael, Jacob, Fritz, John, and Christopher—could by no means be called handsome, but they had no physical defect, and could speak properly; but the King's little godchild had been born with a hare lip, and although the poor infant had to undergo a dangerous operation, still when he grew up he could hardly speak intelligibly. Other children, often his own brothers, laughed at him when he made an attempt to speak, and when he was at all excited,



Mouse-Peter minding the Geese.

his speech became more indistinct; then he would fly to his mother, who alone understood him, and with loud sobs bury his head in her apron.

So no golden lot fell to the King's godchild; the peculiar sympathy for the poor family, aroused by their having to dwell in the open air, had gradually

vanished; the Mouse-Peters settled themselves as they could in the room of the poor-house: Peter looked after the geese, caught moles, mice, and weasels, and of the royal christening gift, long since all trace had disappeared.

(To be continued.)



"Stop! stop!" — He rushed up to him and held him fast.

THE KING'S GODCHILD.

(Continued from p. 216.)



CHAPTER II.

One in that little town greeted with more delight the advent of spring than Mouse-Peter and his family. Lady Day was kept as a holiday then, and all the boys ran through the streets where the weavers dwelt, shouting,—

'Lady Day, Lady Day,
The weaver puts his lamp away,'

because on that day the weavers no longer worked by lamplight. On this day, too, with loud demonstrations of joy, Peter, the goose-general, marched for the first time through the town whence from every lane and corner his new subjects were driven out to him. He was glad when Peter and Michael, his two eldest sons, had grown big enough to be able to help him, and with loud cries chased on the geese. Then, too, he received the extra pound of bread for each goose, and for a while there was plenty in the family. In the poor-house they had only a lodging, they had to provide their own food.

In fine weather it was very pleasant for the boys after school hours to jump about in the goose-meadow. They often felt their father's stick if they wilfully and unnecessarily chased the birds, but they soon learned to look after them properly, and spent a merry life on the meadow. Their mother was nearly always ill, so they had to take little William with them too in the rickety wheelbarrow which their father had put together himself; but they were ashamed of him, because he was such an ugly child; they pushed the barrow under a tree, and when the child cried none of them would go and drag him about. When he was able to crawl alone, they put him down on the ground and left him to himself. 'No harm will come to William,' was their constant saying; and he had in fact fallen down in many places and rolled down a great many hills; he had scars and bruises on his head and face, but he always recovered at last.

Neither in rainy weather was it so bad: they all crouched together under the projecting wall, and cried in chorus for half-an-hour long,—

'Sun, come out;
Rain, go away.'

And if it did not stop, Michael, whom Mouse-Peter himself declared to be the cleverest of his boys, would tell a terrible ghost or witch story. When it cleared up, and the geese waddled happily through the little puddles which the rain had made, they would change their tone and sing some other song. But if William tried to sing or shout with them, the others would exclaim, 'Shut up your mouth! when you sing you make such a horrid noise;' and William would be silent.

Peter and Michael, who were now their father's helpers, were also deputed by him to go and receive the half-kreuzers on Saturday mornings. The father

kept a sharp look-out over them, and the one only attempt to keep back a couple of half-kreuzers was visited with so severe a thrashing that it was never tried again. Peter and his wife, in all their poverty, were very strict as to honesty, and impressed upon their children the necessity of being honest, not so much because it was God's will and command, but 'because it is such a disgrace when it comes out before other people, that one has been dishonest.'

In summer, too, it was a pleasant time, and the happiest day was the Church dedication festival in October, when to the half-kreuzers of the gooseherd a large piece of cake was added; that was a feast-day in the poor-house, and even William did not suffer want; the brothers indeed refused to take him with them, 'because he was so ugly,' but they always brought him his share.

It was otherwise when the days grew shorter and cooler: an unwelcome festival was that of SS. Simon and Jude for the Mouse-Peter family, for then all the summer glories were at an end, and in the evening of that day Peter drove his herd in admirable order for the last time into the town. So cautious and careful a goose-general was he, that he well deserved the little extra gifts which people now and then gave him at the end of his half year.

'Ignorant people think,' he would say, 'that one goose is just like another, only one is white and another grey; but I know each; if a strange one comes among mine, and she stands there so stupid like, and quacks different from the others, I know at once that she does not belong to us.'

With winter came sad times. Peter was rarely able to spare much of his summer wages for the cold days; moles, mice, weasels crept into their holes, nothing then could be earned, and there was often bitter want in the poor-house, especially when the boys grew bigger and required larger clothes, and more bread; then sometimes they would go out with their father into the wood to pick up dry fagots which they made up into bundles to sell; now and then, too, they would be sent on an errand, but that was very rarely the case. Often did the thought press very heavily on old Mouse-Peter's mind, as to what was to become of these seven boys; he had no means of letting them learn a trade, no friends or relations who could provide for them, and he had never learned to commend himself and his family to the great Father in Heaven, Who suffers none to be lost. It was long since he or his wife had been to church. 'She is too wretched,' said he, 'and I have no clothes;' and so they lived on day after day thinking that the good God was only for rich people who could go to church in fine clothes. They only mentioned God's name when they sighed and said, 'As to poor William it would be best if the good God was to take him to Himself.' William often heard them say that, but no one thought that the child could understand it, and that it deeply wounded his heart.

CHAPTER III.

It was now eighteen years since Mouse-Peter had taken up his abode under the lime-tree. Whit Sunday had dawned, a morning so beautiful and clear that it well befitted so great a festival. The meadows

and hedges were bright with flowers. On all sides might be heard from far and near the sound of the early church bells; the children had put on their new frocks, and the mothers, too, had dressed in their very best to go to church. Thoughtless folk, who did not know how happy a festival becomes when its earliest hours are devoted to the Lord, were already on their way out of the gates on parties of pleasure.

But one went out through the gate quite alone and unnoticed, who did not look like a devout church-goer, nor a merry pleasure-goer.

He who stood there, so alone, so entirely forsaken as he thought, by God and by the world, was the King's godchild, William, the Mouse-Peter's son.

His mother had been dead for the last ten years; she was the only being on earth who ever loved him. Two years ago they had buried his father also. His brothers were with difficulty provided for: the parish had paid a tailor to take the clever Michael as an apprentice, and a shoemaker to take Jacob, Fritz had become a weaver, and Peter, the strongest, had become servant to a farmer, Johan and Christopher together performed the office of gooseherds, and tried to add to it that of mouse-catching, but poor William stood alone with nothing whatever to do.

With his disfigured face and indistinct utterance he had everywhere been in the way; he had been sent to school, but the master scarcely troubled himself about him, because a burst of laughter always arose as often as he had to read or repeat a text; no one would take him as an apprentice: 'People would run away from such a fellow when he brought them any work, neither can any one understand him; and he is hard of hearing too.' So he was left in the poor-house, and now and then got work as a day-labourer. But even as such, though he was strong and industrious, healthy, good-looking men, who could speak properly, were preferred to him; he had not a single companion, his elder brothers were away, his two younger were ashamed of him, and when he was once ill and wretched, and tossed about in his bed, he heard the master of the poor-house say, 'Well, if he never got up again no one would grieve, but death is not likely to take such a one.'

Never had poor William so deeply felt his solitude as he did on that Whit Sunday morning; the brighter the sun shone, and the clearer the larks sang, the more low-spirited he became. He had never learned to pray. Once, just as her death was approaching, his mother had said to him, 'Oh, William, we ought to have thought more about the good God! only pray to Him, and then He will have compassion on you.' But he did not know much about prayer. He could, indeed, repeat the 'Our Father,' that was all, and no one fanned the spark which was then kindled within him.

He had earned nothing for the last few days; he had not even a decent suit of clothes, only an old green smock; he was ashamed on this holy day to be seen among other people. For a long time he had been cherishing a dark design—to-day he would himself put an end to his existence, and with the last two groschen that he had earned by stone-breaking he had bought a rope with which to hang himself.

On the road along which he walked stood trees

enough for his dreadful purpose, but he would not do it there, he feared to be disturbed.

So he climbed over the hedge into the garden of the 'Eagle' public-house, a shady, dreary-looking spot, in the centre of which stood an old stone cottage about which horrible stories were related. Of these William never thought, only that here he should be quite undisturbed. He did not know that another cheerless heart, solitary and sad, was passing this bright sunny morning in this garden. This was old Müller, the father of the landlady of the 'Eagle'; and although matters were not so bad with him as with poor William, yet he thought there was no more happiness for him in the world; and, though he had not decided on so wicked and desperate a remedy as the King's godson, yet he sat gloomy and despondent in the stone summer-house, and gazed into the Neckar which flowed past the garden, and thought whether in the end it would not be as well for him to seek a grave beneath its waters.

The old man had latterly become stone deaf, the merry song of birds, the cheerful babbling of his grandchildren, the lively gossip in the Sun parlour were all silenced for him; neither did he hear any more the sound of the church bells, and so a deep melancholy had come over him; when people laughed he thought they were making fun of him, when they talked together, he grumbled because no one took the trouble to repeat to him what they said, and so today, when the others were preparing to go to church, morose and discontented he had gone alone into the garden. 'For what purpose am I still in the world?' he murmured; 'I can do nothing to help any one, and no one wants anything from me.'

Then he looked up and was amazed to see William. What was he doing there? There was nothing for him to steal, and so far as he knew poor William had never stolen. But he soon saw what he was about when William took out his rope, fastened it to a tree and made a loop.

The wretched youth was on the point of fetching a large stone on which he was going to mount to perform his last horrid act, when the spell which hitherto seemed to weigh upon the old man and prevented his speaking was broken, and with a loud cry, 'Stop! Stop!' he rushed up to him and held him fast. But William struggled to free himself from the grasp of his deliverer; but he seized him with almost youthful strength, would not let him go, and drew him with him away into the town up into his own little room.

(Concluded in our next.)

GOOD FOR EVIL.

THE following clause was inserted in her will by a Polish Princess when dying through the carelessness of her surgeon. 'Convinced of the injury that my unfortunate accident will occasion to the unhappy surgeon who is the cause of my death, I bequeath to him a life annuity of two hundred ducats, secured by my estate, and forgive him from my heart.'

A French lady, who came by her death in a similar way, left the surgeon a large annuity on condition that he never bled a patient again. A. R. B.



A FATHER'S PRAYER.

MY girl, how could you pain me so?
 How could you so deceitful be?
 My daughter, you must surely know
 How very dear you are to me.

And how it grieves me every day
 To see you careless, rude, and wild,
 To know that when I am away
 I cannot trust my only child!

Your mother, Alice, is in Heaven,
 She left you to my loving care.
 Ah, child, may grace to us be given
 That we may both be taken there:

That we may meet her once again
 Upon that happy, sinless shore,
 Where nought of grief or aching pain
 Shall vex our hearts for evermore.

D. B.



The Visit to the Prison.

IVAN THE YOUNG RUSSIAN.

MANY years ago there lived, close by the edge of a great Russian forest, a worthy man and his two sons, all three being men who lived quiet and peaceable lives, tilling the soil, cutting down the fragrant pines, and manufacturing tar, which was afterwards sent to Archangel, many miles away, for distribution over the whole world. The old man

belonged to the Official or State Church, and was very devout in his way, while Michael his eldest son was in all respects a perfect copy of his father, a good, simple-hearted young man, with patient gentle manners and a profound veneration for all lawful authority, from the Emperor himself down to the parish priest, who was, indeed, his friend and counsellor. Ivan the younger son, however, was a lad of different spirit. He was as good as Michael, but he

was bright and restless, not able to settle down to the dull life of a woodman, and with an intense longing to see the world.

One morning, therefore, he contrived to slip away from home with the bold intention of making his way to Archangel, and finding employment in the first place about the shipping of that busy port. In this he was successful, and he soon met some German sailors from the Baltic, whose thrilling songs and stories so stirred the heart of young Ivan that he resolved to make a voyage with his new friends. But for a young man to quit Russia without a pass from the police was, in those days, a grave offence, sure to be punished by the 'knout,' or by banishment to Siberia. Yet Ivan felt sure that a pass would not be given to him, therefore when the German vessel was about to sail he watched his opportunity and crept on board during the night, contriving to escape without detection by the port police.

The *Hero*, for so the vessel was named in which the young Russian had thus launched himself, traded as a rule between German and Danish ports. She sometimes, however, ran over to the Thames or the Tyne, so that the young Russian was able to see a little of that wonderful England of which he had often heard while at home. He learned to speak a little of the language, to eat English beef, and drink English beer, and, in short, was in a fair way of forgetting his simple Russian home, with its dinner of black bread and salted cod-fish, with perhaps a glass of sour quass to wash it all down, when something happened to entirely change the current of his thoughts.

The *Hero* was chartered again for Archangel, and he must either leave his ship or once more return to his native land. Ivan's heart was greatly agitated: he knew the danger of keeping by the ship and being detected by the police of Archangel as a runaway, yet, a strong desire to visit his native land was rising up in his heart. Oh, how he longed once more to see the forest home, and to embrace the old father, if, indeed, he was still alive! Yes, he would make the venture; and in a few days Ivan was sailing merrily away bound for Archangel.

With a shaven chin and a foreign name he might have kept his secret, and got away from Archangel undiscovered by the port police, had he not foolishly gone with some of his comrades to a drinking den and indulged in his native vodka, an evil spirit which has overturned the brain of many a Russian, just as whisky and gin have done for foolish persons in our own country. When he awoke from his drunkenness his mates had left him, the ship had sailed. What could he do? Any little property he had was on board the *Hero*. He could not pay his way, and yet he would soon be obliged to give some account of himself. In this dilemma he fell upon a clever expedient: he resolved to become a pilgrim, and in this disguise to travel home.

Here we must explain that Russia is the land of pilgrims, and any one in this garb is sure of not only travelling unmolested, but of obtaining food and shelter from devout persons on his way. Of course, if detected he would have been at once arrested, but the chances were against detection. Ivan had not

made a mistake in his calculations, his plan was successful, and after a fortnight's weary, dusty travel, he at length drew near the humble home which sheltered those who were dearest to him on earth.

But we must leave Ivan for a little, and look in upon his brother, who all these years had been busy with his pine-trees and his tar.

Michael was now the head of the concern, for the good old father was gone; and feeling solitary in his home, he had taken to himself a wife, Katinka, the favourite niece of the parish priest, who, with his two boys and one little daughter, made the joy and gladness of his life. The three young people were all between ten and fourteen years of age at the time of their Uncle Ivan's return.

It would be impossible to describe the astonishment of Michael, when, underneath the garb of a pilgrim, he recognised the face and form of his long-lost and dearly loved brother. But astonishment soon gave place to agitation and fear. Ivan had long since been missed, his name was on the books of the secret police as a runaway, and in order to save him from punishment it was necessary to conceal the fact of his return to the forest-home. After much consultation it was resolved to pass him off among their few neighbours as a wandering stranger in search of employment. He was to be addressed by the name of Dimitri, and very little notice was to be taken of him either by Katinka or the children, who gazed with astonishment upon the stranger uncle who was yet to be no uncle to them, but a labourer employed by their father in his forest work. This arrangement seemed to work for a few days; but the Russian police have eyes and ears everywhere, and ere a week had passed Ivan was loaded with chains and thrown into a dungeon.

Alas! another charge had also been made against him: he was accused of having given up his religion, and accepted some of the heresies of foreign countries.

'Can it be true, Michael?' asked the kind-hearted Katinka, almost with a shudder. 'They say that your brother has sold himself to the devil. Oh, can it be true?'

Michael slowly shook his head with a look of great trouble. 'One hardly knows,' he replied. 'We must pray for him. I fear he denies our holy Church; he thinks himself wiser than the Holy Governing Synod. He needs our prayers, motherkin, he needs our prayers.'

And so, indeed, he did, for poor Ivan's captivity was a terrible one. Without any trial, without even knowing who his accusers were, and of what he was accused, he had been thrust into a damp and dark cell, the window of which was ribbed and crossed with iron, a small table, a pallet bed, and a bundle of straw, were all the furniture allowed him. And in this evil condition we must leave him for a while, and turn our attention to other members of the unfortunate family.

We have said that Katinka was niece of the parish priest, and this relationship at once raised Michael's family a step above their neighbours. For the priest is the one great man of the village: he has a voice with other persons in authority, and can get the affairs of any man, in Ivan's condition,

looked into without that fearful postponement of trial, which is so great a curse to any country.

Katinka at once went to her uncle, and besought his intervention with the authorities; she was the more eager in the matter since poor Michael had fallen ill with anxiety of heart and was unable, of himself, to do anything. But many sufferings had to be undergone before Ivan was again to find himself a free man. Although, on the priest's solicitations, the two boys were permitted to visit their uncle in his prison, and to carry him consoling messages and words of cheer from their father, more favour than this even the priest could not obtain for the present.

As the weeks and months slowly passed away the position of Katinka and her young family became every day more distressing. Michael's illness did not yield to medical treatment, rather he became worse till his disease resolved itself into a dangerous fever, from which it soon appeared that he would not recover. Little Marfa, his beloved daughter, was also laid low with the same sickness, while little intelligence could be gained regarding the fate of Ivan, the two boys having been refused admittance to his cell for some weeks past, on the plea that, coming from an infected house, they might carry disease with them into the prison.

Meanwhile, poor patient Michael died, a victim to anxiety and sorrow of spirit, leaving his dear Katinka and her children with none to work for them, none to advise them save Father Nathaniel, who again interceded with the authorities for the pardon of Ivan, or at least for his speedy trial, on the plea that since his brother's death he was the sole protector, by law, of the widow and children. No answer, however, was received to this appeal.

At length, one day, while little Marfa, too ill even to be told of her father's death, lay tossing uneasily on her pillow, a loud commotion in the yard below proclaimed the arrival of some one in authority. This proved to be an emissary of the police, who, being admitted by the trembling Katinka, forthwith proceeded to examine the house, and to question her as to her resources, and the position of her family, all the time refusing any information with regard to Ivan or his prospects either for a fair trial or a free pardon. Meanwhile little Marfa recovered her health, Father Nathaniel made some arrangements for the comfort of the distressed family, and things began to settle down again, still Ivan came not; so far as any one knew, he might be in Siberia, or he might be dead.

Meanwhile there was dawning upon Russia a sunrise of hope and blessed liberty: a decree having been passed for the total emancipation of the serfs (1861), and such a movement could not but bring with it many other blessed experiences, new to Russia, but common mercies in happier lands.

Among other blessings, many dungeons were thrown open, and prisoners pale with long confinement, prisoners who had never even been tried, walked forth into the blessed light of day and returned to their homes, at least such of them as had any friends left. Among these was poor Ivan, who reached the dear forest home just as the little family were closing the door for the night. The

young people looked curiously at him, but in this pale, thin, grey-haired man they failed to recognise any one whom they had ever seen before. Katinka, however, was keener of vision than her children: rising to her feet with a cry of thankfulness and joy, she threw herself into the stranger's arms, and then she fell to the ground fainting from excess of joy.

Yes, Ivan had returned after three years' experience of a Russian dungeon, and when we remember what his crime had been, merely leaving the country without having first obtained permission from the police, we must admit that his punishment had been indeed very severe.

But his sorrows and sufferings were now things of the past, and Ivan was quite cured of his youthful love of adventure. There were many things for him to attend to in the dear home of his childhood, where, with the widow and children of his loved brother Michael, he spent the remainder of his life in the peaceful occupation of a woodman, carrying on his father's business with the help of his father's two sturdy young grandsons, who were growing up in better times than he had known in his youth.

But before Ivan settled down to this life of peaceful industry he had one duty to fulfil; this was to express his gratitude to one official who, in the time of his sad captivity, had befriended him more than once, and whose unvarying kindness had sweetened the bitterness of the dungeon from which he had not the power to release the captive. When Katinka and her family had heard all Ivan's story, their simple hearts were touched, and they requested permission to accompany him, that they too might kiss the hand of the friend who had been considerate and humane towards one so dear to them.

And now that Ivan is restored to his liberty and his home, our story has come to a close. But we must remind our young readers what privileges we enjoy, who are free to come and to go at will, none making us afraid, and if, unhappily, we should be accused of any breach of the law, we are at least sure of a fair trial and an impartial judgment at the hands of our fellow-countrymen. MCK.

A GOOD-TEMPERED AUTHOR.

IT is said of Soame Jenyns, an author of the last century, that he had an amount of good humour rarely met with. The following story is told as a proof of this.

A friend called upon him one day, and was invited by him to have some refreshment. Jenyns rang the bell, and ordered cold meat. Presently the servant returned to say that there was not a morsel in the larder. When he had left the room, Jenyns said,

'Now we had a large round of beef dressed yesterday, this is therefore rather strange. But I expect these things, and, that I may not lose my temper, I set down 300*l.* to losses by lying and cheating, and thus maintain my composure.'

But was it not possible to have kept his temper and the 300*l.*: and at the same time to have put down 'lying and cheating' in his household? Surely it was. A. R. B.



The Police emissary and Katinka.



"'Stegbert's, young gem'men?' said the decrepit Coachman."

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

A SCHOOL STORY.

By the Author of 'Six Months in the Fourth.'

CHAPTER I.

TWO boys were sitting in the same compartment of a railway train. It was a January morning in the year 1875, and the day was bitterly cold. The state of the weather was to some extent shown by the noses of the two young travellers, which had already assumed a slightly blue tint. But the weather alone could not have accounted for the gloom which sat on each of their faces. It was due, in fact, to quite another cause, viz., that they were both going to a new school for the first time. But as the one did not know the fate of the other, it could not, of course, afford the comfort it might have done.

They travelled many miles in silence, the fair boy with the blue eyes frequently refreshing himself by an examination of a small satchel which seemed to contain eatables, whilst the dark lad with crisp little curls ever and anon flattened his nose against the misty window-pane in his efforts to examine the surrounding country.

At length enthusiasm drove him to break the long silence.

'Stunning ice!' he cried, as the train skimmed along an embankment past some flooded and frozen meadows.

'Stunning!' echoed the other, with somewhat less enthusiasm, as he rubbed a pane clear in order to observe so attractive a spectacle.

'Don't I wish I was on it!' continued the dark lad. 'I've just learnt the outside edge, and there's a jolly new pair of skates in my box.'

'Perhaps there'll be skating where you're going,' suggested the other.

The dark boy shook his head mournfully.

'I don't know; and if there was, perhaps they wouldn't let you have much of it. I'm going to school.'

'Are you? Why, so am I!'

'Ah, I dare say you like yours. Do you know all the fellows? Wasn't it awkward at first?'

'Why, I don't know,' said the fair boy, 'because this is my first term there.'

'Ah, then, we're in the same box. But I'm going to St. Egbert's, and —'

'So am I!'

'No?'

'Yes, I am not joking.'

'What a lark! Let's be chums. What's your name?'

'My name's Herbert Battersley, and I come from London,' said the fair boy.

'You're a cockney, are you? Norman Baylis is my name, and we live at Dover.'

What a pleasant day it seemed to have become all at once! St. Egbert's did not seem half such a dreadful place now each had a companion in misfortune, and they were able for the time to take quite a cheerful view of their coming experiences.

Encouraged by companionship, Battersley once more peered into the interior of the satchel, and, bringing out a package of sandwiches, he invited Baylis to help himself.

This request was readily complied with, and the pair of travellers were soon employed in a way that made conversation unnecessary.

To the sandwiches succeeded apples, and when at last the satchel was empty, the two once more fell a-talking of the future.

'I shouldn't mind it so much,' began Battersley, 'if I had ever been to a school before. But they always kept me at home with my sisters and Miss Cramp —'

'Governess, eh?'

'Rather; and no end of a swell, too. I believe she knew a bit of everything under the sun.'

'Ah, I know. But I went to school when I was nine; not a big school, you know, only eight or ten fellows, all youngsters; and a jolly kind master, who used to let us cut about in his field and orchard just as we liked.'

'Why didn't they let you stay there?'

'Oh, my father said I was grown too big for it, and wasn't getting on there; though I know I was, all the same. I hadn't the least idea of cricket when I went to Marshall's, and last summer I was captain there; and as for skating or swimming, I was a regular little muff at first, but now I'm coming on well with them. I don't know what he meant by it.'

'Perhaps it was the books he was thinking of?'

'Perhaps so,' said Baylis, with a meditative air; 'but he never said it was that.'

Meanwhile they were steadily nearing their journey's end, and the old dread began to return with twofold intensity.

'I say,' said Baylis, 'don't you wish we may be put into the same form, and into the same dormitory?'

'Don't I!' returned the other, who, indeed, seemed little qualified to meet hardships, if such were before them.

Then another prolonged silence ensued, the minds of both being busy in imagining the future, with all manner of unpleasant things turning up at all points.

'Winterham! Winterham!' yelled the porter, as their train glided into a country station.

'Here we are!' said Baylis, with a ghastly attempt at a smile of confidence.

They collected their belongings and stepped out on to the platform. Two or three lads, much older than themselves, were already beside the passengers' luggage, ordering the porters with many words.

Advancing to the door of the luggage compartment, Norman Baylis began to peer about for his own box and that of his friend.

'Now, my beauty, where are you coming to?'

asked a smartly dressed young man, looking down on our fellow-travellers over a high and very stiff collar.

'Louts!' said a short, bull-necked youth, with a very red face.

'Oh, these are some of the rising generation!' observed a bright lad, the youngest of this senior group. He was lame, walking with the aid of one crutch; but there was no mistaking the intelligence shown in his face.

'Rising young puppies!' said he of the collar. 'But I'll take it out of them if they're coming to St. Egbert's.'

'Serve 'em right, too!' said the bull-necked worthy. 'Why can't they wait till our things are out?'

'And let their own go on by train?' suggested the lame lad.

'Yes; to Jericho if they like!' was the sulky answer.

But by this time the porters had collected all the boxes and conveyed them to the outside of the station.

The senior group immediately hired the only cab in waiting. Battersley and Baylis were left looking disconsolately at a rickety old one-horse 'bus.

'Stegbert's, young gem'men?' said the decrepit coachman, who seemed made to match his vehicle; 'Stegbert's? Run you down in no time.'

There was no choice; and the two lads therefor jumped into the musty carriage with as much cheerfulness as the circumstances would permit.

Just as they were driving off they heard a shout, and the 'bus stopped.

'Don't go without me,' said the lame lad, coming to the door. 'I had to send off a telegram about a small box left behind, and those fellows have left me behind.'

Baylis and Battersley welcomed him eagerly, feeling that a debt of gratitude was due on their part to the cab-load who had preceded them. Here they were beginning at once an acquaintance with a boy who could evidently hold his own with the biggest fellows at St. Egbert's.

With curiosity most natural under their circumstances, they soon fell to questioning their new-found friend.

'The one in the big collar? Oh, that's Nicholson; he is rather a swell, and no end of a bully, too, into the bargain, but a coward all the same. He's no block-head: it takes a good man to beat him when he tries; but his mind isn't balanced; he thinks a good deal more about the amount of starch in his collars than of his place in the form.'

'And the fat fellow?'

'Oh, Grant, otherwise Bruin. Well, he's a regular grizzly, and no mistake. His sulks are supreme: you never saw anything like them in your life before—perfection. He's a bully, too, only too lazy to do much that way, and the young beggars take it out of him sometimes. You should see him pant around the playground after them: oh, my!'

And here the narrator was overcome with the comic nature of these reminiscences, and relapsed into laughter so contagious that Norman and his friend were fain to join in themselves, laughing most heartily at a scene likely soon to be repeated with some unpleasant variations in their own case.

'My name's Leslie, you know,' continued the lame lad, when he had resumed his gravity; 'and I'm in the sixth; that's how you find me in such distinguished company this afternoon. Not, mind you, that Grant is in that form. He still vegetates at the bottom of the fifth, and it's one of the mysteries still unfathomed by the wisest of us how he has reached that exalted post.'

'How many fellows are there at St. Egbert's?' asked Battersley in his timid way.

'Last term there were about fifty in the house—boarders, you know: and about another fifty who come from all around—farmers' sons mostly, with a sprinkling of such young bloods as Winterham can produce.'

Then came another brief silence, this time broken by Leslie, whose conversation was ready to flow on the smallest provocation.

'Peg away with your questions, you fellows; don't mind pumping me. Now's your time! I wouldn't take you in at any price, but you will find the other little beggars of your form will think they are "licensed to sell" you until you are up to their little games.'

Baylis at once responded to this amiable request.

'Is there any skating round about? And will they let a fellow go?'

'Skating!' said Leslie, with a look of rapture. 'Oh, my! Isn't there? But I don't do much at it myself.' And here he glanced sadly at the end of his crutch.

Baylis and Battersley felt tempted to ask how he contrived to enjoy this pastime at all, but a feeling of delicacy at alluding to his defect restrained them.

'There's a pond in the playground,' he presently continued.

'Deep?' asked Baylis, his interest fired by this promise of his favourite sport.

'Oh, no; you would be out in a twinkling if the ice gave way.'

'Many go on it?'

'Well, no, not many. I'm afraid we are not very strong in the skating line.'

'Ah,' said Baylis, 'I'll show them a thing or two! I've just learnt the outside edge. You should see my new skates!'

Leslie was just expressing the pleasure it would give him to see the owner on them, and exhibiting a series of those manoeuvres so easy from the spectator's point of view and so puzzling from that of the learner, when the 'bus stopped.

'Halloo!' said he; 'why, here we are at St. Egbert's! I hadn't noticed how we were coming along. Pleasant company, you know; that was it.'

The two new boys alighted first, and Battersley quietly turned to help their lame friend out.

'Not a finger, thank you,' was the reply to his gesture; 'don't mention it, I beg.'

With this he tucked the crutch beneath one arm, holding it like a lance in rest, and took a flying leap from the 'bus door into the gateway, alighting with a clatter that at once brought the porter to the door.

'That's you, sir, I knows,' exclaimed that worthy, as he appeared. 'It's a mussy you didn't light on the cat's tail as you did last time, likewise the time before.'

'Chips,' was the reply, 'don't allude to such painful circumstances. These are two new fellows. Take them in, and make them happy. See you again soon.' And with this he took himself off.

The porter, whose name was Smallpiece, but who was never known amongst the boys by any other title than that of Chips, at once began to take in their boxes.

'He's a queer 'un, an' no mistake,' he observed, indicating with his thumb the retreating figure of Leslie. 'Always up to his jokes. I never see sich cheek in my life! I believe he'd ask kernundrums of the Pope, if he met him.'

Chips was a short, highly-dried, wizened, little man, born and bred in London, and only recently



Rival Friends.

removed to Winterham, for the people and surroundings of which he had the most profound contempt. His private opinion was, that so much wisdom and goodness were collected in the metropolis that the amount available for distribution in the provinces was very small, and made it impossible for Winterham to have much of either.

Viewed in this light, his own presence at a school near that benighted village could only be regarded as a prodigious compliment.

'And where may you two gents be from?' he asked. It was a question he always seized an early opportunity of putting; and the reply settled, for a time at all events, the position of the new pupil in his estimation.

'I belong to London,' said Battersley.

'London!' said Chips. ('Two an' sixpence for the

'bus man, please, sir.') 'There's no town like that. Think o' the streets! Why, there's no beautifuller sight in the world nor Whitechapel High Street on a Saturday night! This way, young gen'elmen, and mind the step in the corner. And where be you from, sir?' This to Norman Baylis.

'I'm from Dover.'

Ah, Dover. Well, a sweet little place, as I've heard my sister say, as once went there to see her young man, who was a soldier in garrison there. And not far from London. I dare say they feel a'most as though they lived there. But this is the box-room, gents, and here's the housekeeper a-comin', so I wish you a nappy term, and many ov 'em.'

With this sentiment Chips retired, and the two new boys felt themselves fairly landed at St. Egbert's.

(To be continued.)



Badgers.

RIVAL FRIENDS.

SHE came to feed the tiny ducks
(Contented little things!).
They gobble up her crusts of bread,
And shake their downy wings.

But Keeper thinks, of course, that he
The pleasant feast may share,
And watches every little bit
With eager, hungry air.

Poor dog! he does not understand
Why she will not respond

To all his anxious looks, but still
Sits gazing on the pond.

New friends, I fear, engross her now;
But still—one thing I know,—
If she must choose between her friends,
She'd let the ducklings go.

D. B.

BADGERS.

THE Badger is of a greyish colour above and black
beneath, with a dusky band on each side of the
head, which is whitish.

The common species has five toes on each foot, well armed with sharp claws. Its habits are like those of the bear: it is easily tamed, but when attacked it fights with great courage. Badger-baiting is a favourite, but brutal and cruel amusement, in some parts of Europe.

The badger is said to be the most social of any animal. It lives in the greatest harmony with its own species, feeding chiefly on nuts, roots, and vegetables. It is cleanly in its habits, washing itself while the dew is on the ground.

The American badger has long and stout claws, which enable it to burrow with great rapidity. There is only one species well known, which is valuable for the fine quality of its fur. The head is white, with a black bar down the cheek near the ear. In other respects it resembles the European species.

A RAVEN AND HER YOUNG.

THERE once stood an oak, on which a pair of ravens had for many years built their nest. It was called on this account the Raven Tree. The village boys longed to take the eggs, but they could not, for the bole of the tree swelled out in the middle to such a size that the boldest lad among them was baffled by the obstacle. So the ravens lived on in peace, setting their tormentors at defiance, and rearing many families.

At length, an order came for the tree to be cut down. And so, the woodmen approached with their fatal axes, and began the work of destruction. But the raven, who was sitting on her eggs, did not stir, though the sound of axes and mallets echoed far and wide through the forest. At length man and his iron tools prevailed, and the tree came down with a mighty crash. When it fell, the poor bird was flung violently down and killed in an instant. She surely deserved a better end. There are very few ravens now in England, and soon there will probably be none.

S.

THE KING'S GODCHILD.

(Concluded from page 219.)



HERE sat William, now sad and with bent head. He was himself ashamed of his evil resolution, and feared, too, lest people should mock and chide him about it: but this was not so. All felt that they were to blame for their conduct towards poor William, to whom none had held out a friendly helping hand, and all now heard

was the exclamation of pity, 'Poor fellow!' or, 'If I had known that I would often have given him a day's work;' or, 'My boy, the rogue! was the first to laugh at him: he shall pay for it.'

The doctor ordered William to be put to bed at the poor-house, and dispersed all these talkative people.

Service in the church was over, and the sound of the bells as they again merrily rang came to poor William's ears. Folk had opened the window in his chamber, the soft air streamed in, one of the poor-house girls had brought him a little nosegay of white and yellow flowers in a broken flower-pot. He felt now glad that he was still alive.

The clergyman entered the room; he spoke very seriously to him, told him what a grievous sin he had wished to commit in destroying that life which the Lord had entrusted to him and with which he might win Heaven.

'Ah! indeed, it was wrong,' William confessed; 'but I felt so forsaken in the world. Every one said it would be a good thing if I were no longer here; and when I told them that they made me worse with their remarks, they mocked me, and said, "Go to your godfather the King, he will be pleased to see what a handsome godson he has!" And once, indeed, I did make up my mind to go to him,' William confessed to the pastor in confidence, and thought I would tell him everything, and that, perhaps he would give me a piece of gold, so that I could buy some tools and go and work at the railway; but when I got to the palace the soldiers and servants, and the fellows loitering about there, mocked and laughed at me, and said I should get a good thrashing for my pains; so I did not make the attempt again.'

'Your godfather, the King, has heard nothing about this,' said the pastor, smiling; 'and if, too, he knew all about the sorrowing hearts in his country, he could not help them, though he is the king. But you have a Father in Heaven, Who is abundantly merciful to all who call upon Him: and an elder Brother, Who is not ashamed of you, Who, out of love to you, came down from Heaven and endured far more sorrow than you have ever suffered; to Him you may tell everything that weighs upon your heart: He has called the weary and heavy laden to Him. And if He permits you to be poor upon earth, it is only because He wishes to make you eternally rich in Heaven.'

It was only very slowly that poor William was able to comprehend these blessed tidings, which, indeed, he had heard long ago, but which had never before sounded as if they were intended for him. But he learned how to lift up his heart to Him to Whom no one prays in vain, and when in the evening he fell asleep on his wretched pallet, poor, ugly, lonely as before, he slept with that blessed, peaceful feeling, that Eternal Love thought of and remembered him.

Among the many people in the town who had been told that day about poor William, was Emma, the Mayor's daughter; her father pitied the poor fellow heartily, and determined now and then to give him some work in his garden. 'Yes,' he said to his daughter, 'how widely do lots differ in this world! Only think that you were born on the same day as that poor lad! How different your condition is!'

Emma thought this very strange too, and she meditated a long time about God's mysterious ways, and His goodness to her.

On the evening after Whit Sunday, William sat on the bench before the poor-house, whither they had brought him, quite alone. People had become kind

to him, the clergyman had been to see him again, and the doctor's wife had sent him a good meal, other people had promised to give him work. All this pleased him, but his wish now was to remove to another place. He was ashamed of himself here; he thought every one would stare at him, and he feared when the first feeling of compassion was over, lest he should again become a laughing-stock.

But since yesterday, William had learned a holy art; he had learned how to pray, and so he could take this wish also to his Father in Heaven, and feel, 'If Thou wilt, dear Lord, Thou canst help me to it; and if Thou wilt not, I can wait.'

Then he heard a light step; he looked up in amazement and thought he was dreaming. A beautiful young lady stood before him in a pink dress, with a blooming, pleasant face; it was Fräulein Emma: but although she was not generally timid yet now she felt rather shy and embarrassed.

'William,' she said at last kindly, 'I know that you are the King's godson, but your christening gift has long ago been spent. I have not such a grand godfather, but I still have a christening gift which I do not want, because my parents are still alive, and they have allowed me to give it to you.' In his rough brown hand she placed a louis d'or and two ducats, and before William could recover his surprise or thank her she had vanished. He almost thought he was dreaming, or that an angel from Heaven had appeared to him; but what did become clear to him was, that the good God had here, through a kind human hand, helped him to the fulfilment of his wish; and then occurred what had never happened in his whole life before, he wept for joy.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW weeks after, William, most respectably dressed in a neat jacket, with a new wheelbarrow and strong iron axe and shovel, departed from the town. Old Müller, who rejoiced that the good God had made use of him as an instrument to save the poor fellow, had also given him a beautiful new thaler. William had also taken leave of the clergyman and the doctor, who had given him a letter to a contractor of the first railway in the neighbourhood, which was just then being constructed.

'Now I go to the railway,' he said cheerfully, 'and I will work as hard as two men; perhaps some time I may earn enough to get a house, and who knows that at last the good God may not help me to a cottage?'

'And at last, perchance to a wife,' said the doctor, laughing.

'Anything is possible, sir,' said William, looking very pleased, for he could bear a joke now; 'but I won't be too bold with my wishes. The good God knows what I may want.'

Among all the neat and prettily built cottages along the line inhabited by railway signalmen, or those who attend to level crossings throughout Wurtemberg, there is one with a particularly beautiful and well-kept garden; the piece of ground adjoining it is well-cultivated too, round the windows green vines are trained, and before the door sings a bird in a wicker cage.

Who would have thought that the poor, forsaken

William, would ever have had so cheerful a home! And he is not alone in it either. A neat, pleasant-looking woman, sits in the evening beside him on the bench, and they gaze together contentedly on the beautiful prospect; and a boy and little girl are busily making a little garden for themselves with pebbles and wild flowers from the fields, and they are pretty children. 'They are not at all like you,' people say when they want to pay a compliment to the signalman.

William, indeed, had not been bold enough to ask the good God to grant that he might, with wife and children, rejoice by his own fireside; he esteemed it a very great happiness when, on account of his specially faithful, honest, punctual conduct, the post of signalman was given him. But when, six years ago, he had once paid a visit to his native town, and called at the poor-house to bring gratefully to his remembrance God's gracious guidance, the corpse of a poor widow was just being carried out; this was followed by her only daughter, the same who, as a child six years before, had brought the little nosegay into his room. Hitherto she had nursed and attended to her poor, suffering mother, and now she knew not where in God's wide world she could turn.

'If I am not too rough and ugly for you,' William said to her timidly, 'come with me and be my wife;' and she never repented that she consented to go with him. 'Honesty is better than beauty,' she used to assure people when they spoke about her husband; 'I could not be happier with the handsomest.'

William had let his beard grow, which somewhat covered his unsightly mouth. In the distance he looked very presentable as he stood upright, and with his staff made the signal that all was in order along the line.

He held himself straighter and prouder than usual the first time that his lord and master the King passed by in a special train. With deep respect he gazed at the exalted personage as long as the train was in sight, and prayed in a low voice, 'God bless the King!' But when he returned to his cottage and hung up his uniform on the nail he said to himself, 'Godfather, I would not change places with you.'

Thus everything had turned out well for William. Old Müller, who was praised by everybody as the rescuer of poor William from an early death by his own hand, had now also recognised that there never is a time in the life of any man when he can no longer do a service for God and his brethren. Now he sat patiently in his little chamber with his Bible before him, which he could still read with his spectacles, or on the bench before his house door, or out in the shady garden. If he could not hear, yet he could see, and did not envy the happiest their joy. And now and then the good God showed him a way by which, without much means, and without hearing, yet by good advice or help, he could assist others. So kind greetings from good friends never failed him. Now and then, too, they would come and sit beside him on the bench, and shout something new into his ear. But he and the once so despised poor William have remained good friends, because God chose them both, while wandering on strange paths, to help each other into the right way.

J. F. C.



William sitting on the Bench before the Poor-house.



Green borne struggling up towards the Fireplace.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 228.)

CHAPTER II.



RS. CRISP, the matron, was a woman of imposing appearance, tall, plump, and genial, the widow of a once prosperous Winterham tradesman.

'Ah,' she said with a motherly air, 'two new boys. Now, which are you, Stocks and Slingsby, or Choundy or Battersley?'

'I'm Battersley, please,' said Herbert.

'And I'm Baylis,' said his companion.

'Ah, Baylis and Battersley. Well, if you will give me your keys I will see that your things are properly put out. Then you had better go into the next room, where you will find some other new boys having tea.'

Following the directions given, they presently found themselves in a small, plainly furnished room, where four other boys were seated at a tea-table in a state of extraordinary quietude.

One alone seemed anxious to talk. He was a stout lad, with a round face and prominent eyes.

'Halloo! are you new fellows, too?'

Battersley and Baylis answered that they were.

'All right, so am I; only you're jolly green, I know. I'm not. My name's Green, but it's all a mistake; you don't take me in, so don't you try it.'

Having uttered this caution, he took an enormous bite at a piece of bread and butter, nodding his head in a warning manner the while.

'Why should we want to take you in?' mildly asked Herbert Battersley.

'Oh, I don't know; why should I? Only fellows are always up to it. They were at my old school any way. But it isn't any good trying any games on me, because I know them all; so there now.'

These latter sentences were uttered with an air of such untamable ferocity that Battersley quite quailed before the glance of Green's rolling eyes, and mentally resolved to avoid even the suspicion of giving offence to so fierce a person.

Baylis was less easily intimidated.

'I don't want to try it on with you, but other fellows will, you may be sure. Leslie told us so as we came along.'

'Leslie! who's Leslie? I don't care for Leslie; he had better not come any tricks with me.'

'Leslie's in the sixth.'

'I don't care; I won't stand it any the more for that; you see if I do.'

Certainly, if ravages amongst the bread and butter were any proof of a stout heart and a strong will, Green left the spectators in no doubt on the point, and he crunched the crisp crusts with the air of a man who was grinding his enemy's bones.

Two of the new boys who were most distant from this redoubtable hero seemed to take little notice of the conversation; but an occasional laugh from their corner of the table appeared to jar on Green's nerves.

'I don't see what there is to laugh at,' he said presently; 'you wouldn't laugh if you had been cold-pigged, and booby-trapped, and apple-pie-bedded as I have; but I'm not going to stand it here, nor any grinning either.'

This was too much for one of the laughers, a boy with a face covered with freckles, and a mop of red hair.

'I shall grin if I like,' said he.

'No, you won't,' returned Green.

'Won't I? Who will stop me?'

'I will.'

'I should like to see you.'

Green swallowed a piece of bread and butter with a gulp, and solemnly replied, 'You wait a bit! Won't I give it to you for this? Oh, no!'

This promise to pay at a future date had a very stimulating effect on Wilson—or Freckles, as he was ever afterwards called at school—who rose with a threatening gesture. But further compliments were prevented by the appearance of Mrs. Crisp.

'What a noise you have been making here! I am afraid you are all going to be troublesome. But you must come this way now, for Dr. Swanage wants to see all the new boys.'

The party from the housekeeper's room were joined by one or two later arrivals, who swelled the number to a round dozen. Headed by Mrs. Crisp, they proceeded downstairs and through a long corridor to the study, Green using the occasion for making a warlike show against Freckles, and imitating in dumb show the process of punching his detractor's head.

Presently they arrived at the head master's study, and the awfulness of his presence caused even the truculent Green to look mild and obedient.

Yet Dr. Swanage was by no means an imposing figure. Sitting down he seemed short as well as thin, but when forced to stand his form rose to the height of nearly six feet; but even then he stooped so much that his height appeared less than this.

Yet he was no contemptible person. His learning had made his name known amongst the wise men of the land, and many wondered that he should be content to pass his days at a mere country school. When he raised his eyes from his writing and looked at the new boys over the tops of his gold spectacles, one and all quaked in earnest. But their fears were quite unnecessary. Dr. Swanage was kind and gentle to the verge of indiscretion, and yet at times he knew how to assert his position.

Mrs. Crisp, having performed her customary duty in piloting the new boys so far, had vanished, and the Doctor had them all to himself. They did not know it, but in reality he was as nervous as the most timorous youngster amongst them. He did not like new faces.

'Ah, the new boys. Yes, well, let me see who you are. Oh, this is the list. Now, please, Baylis. Oh, you are Baylis? Very good, I shall know you now. Battersley; ah, yes, quite so. Choundy; of course, yes. Huggins; thank you——' and so on until all had answered to their names and been identified.

This task over, an examination was next made into the scholastic acquirements of the new boys. It did not last long, but all seemed much relieved at its end.

'Now I will just send this note by one of you to Mrs. Crisp to tell her of your classes, and by supper-time she will have arranged where each will sleep. Now you can go back to the big room, and amuse yourselves until half-past-eight.'

Being left to themselves on the journey back, it was expected by some that Green would have renewed his dreadful threat against Freckles, and perhaps even proceed to blows.

To the astonishment of all he made no allusion to the past, but walked on towards the big room without a word or a look that could offend or excite the most touchy of schoolboys.

In the large schoolroom, where the evening had to be spent, they found several of the seasoned scholars; but Baylis and Battersley sat down together rather apart from the rest.

'Look here,' said the former, 'I'm not in the same form with you after all. I'm only in the upper third, and you are in the fourth.'

'Never mind. It can't be helped; I only wish it could: but you can get out of it next term, as he said.'

'Oh, I shall work, never you fear that. And we'll stick by one another through thick and thin—that's agreed, mind.'

'All right,' was the reply. 'But we are in the same dormitory, that's a comfort.'

'Yes; but what's on at the other end of the room?'

This was a question not easily answered by a new boy. Let me, therefore, explain on his behalf.

When St. Egbert's school was first opened, about thirty years before this date, a contested election was dividing the county. Politics on such occasions attack even schoolboys, and that generation at St. Egbert's was violently seized with the epidemic. The whole school divided itself by instinct into two sections, who were called respectively Reds and Blues, after the colours of the rival candidates. The feeling aroused during the contest created such a rivalry between these two parties that the division was never healed. As fast as new boys arrived they were compelled to range themselves on one side or the other, and this custom was kept up with rigorous care year after year, long after the political side of the question had quite fallen out of sight.

The hubbub at the other end of the room, to which the attention of Norman and his friend had been drawn, was caused by the arrival of Nicholson, Leslie, and several others in the sixth, who always conducted the ceremony of choosing. They had issued a command for all the new boys to be brought before them, and Bruin Grant, with some ready assistants, was engaged in executing this order. It is needless to say that Bruin took care to conduct his part of the proceedings in the most painful manner possible.

Now it so happened that Green was the first of the new boys upon whom his eyes fell. He bore down upon him instantly. Green saw that something was in the wind, and at once began to protest.

'What do you want with me, eh? Some game, I know,' and with this he backed into a corner.

'Come out of that,' said Bruin; 'you're wanted.'

'Oh, yes; I dare say. Some nice trick, of course: but you don't sell me—not if I know it. If I am a Green by name, I'm knowing.'

'A sage Green, in fact,' observed Leslie. 'Bring him along, Bruin.'

Thus encouraged, Bruin made a dash at the protesting novice, and one of his lieutenants doing the same, their victim was borne struggling up towards the fireplace, repeatedly reminding his captors that the name of Green most wrongly described his nature. In this manner he was dragged up to the form upon which Nicholson and others sat in dignity.

'Now then,' said the former, 'which are you, Blue or Red?'

'I'm neither,' said their victim; 'I'm Green. But you don't take me in.'

'Green you are, and no mistake. But I don't mean that. Choose your colour; which are you going to take, the Blues or Reds?'

'I don't know anything about any of them, and I don't want to choose.'

'Stow that bosh. You must side with one or the other. Stir him up, Bruin.'

Bruin, nothing loth, administered a succession of pinches to various parts of Green's person, which caused him to utter an unearthly yell.

'Very good, Bruin,' said the chief inquisitor. 'Now, Green, which are you, Blue or Red?'

'I'm blue and black, black and blue—this beggar—'

But he got no farther.

'A Blue! a Blue!' cried the crowd, and Green was at once released as a member of the august body denoted by that colour.

'Fetch that fellow!' was Nicholson's next order, accompanied by a gesture at Baylis.

Having observed the fate of Green, Baylis was ready with an answer, and at once chose Red. Freckles, who was the next victim, made the same reply, possibly from the same reason, namely, to be opposed to Green. Battersley, of course, followed suit, and possibly the rest of the new boys would have followed the same lead, but that Bruin, who was a distinguished member of the Blues, in bringing up the other candidates, privately warned them to this effect, 'You had better go in on Blue, or it will be the worse for you, and to this they readily agreed.

The important ceremony being concluded, Leslie, who was the senior Red present, invited the new recruits of his side to the other end of the room, where he briefly harangued them as to their future duties. This done, he sat familiarly down amongst them, as though to make plain the fact that the claims of this brotherhood were superior to ordinary class distinctions.

Battersley, on the score of their previous acquaintance, ventured to question the great man.

'Are there many rows between the Reds and the Blues?'

'Oh, no: it isn't often we have a pitched battle anywhere. But we lay into one another in our magazines, you know, like fun.'

'Magazines?'

'Yes, each side has its own manuscript magazine, and the gentleman who edits ours shall be nameless. I'll show you our last number in a twinkling.'

Leaving the group for a few minutes he soon returned with a square volume, composed himself in a



Somebody's Shoe.

corner near the fire, and began to turn over the leaves of what looked like a large exercise book.

"Here we are, you see, no end of poetry; our fellows are strong on that. Here's a bit now, a copy of verses by old Bones, who does the staid and solemn business. He calls them "Reflections on Retiring at Night;" and they start well:—

"The day is gone, the night has come,
And I lie here alone."

That's what they call poetical license you know, because fourteen other fellows sleep in his room.

"To count the day's sad wasted sum,
With many a moan."

Bones isn't cheerful: he's too much given to the flute, and that always means melancholy. Then there are two or three conundrums, an "Epitaph on a Grizzly Bear," meaning Bruin Grant, of course, and an essay on the good of division into Blues and Reds by our young friend Tosstop. So now, if any of you are going in for literature, here's your chance. Stick it down in your best copperplate, send it in, and then see what comes of it.

At this point a bell rang, and the entire company filed off towards the dining-hall for supper and prayers.

(To be continued.)

SOMEBODY'S SHOE.

SOMEBODY'S left a little shoe,
A little shoe, on the Vicarage stairs;
She has gone away, as a child will do,
Shoeless to look to her own affairs.

The world's arrangements sit on her light,
She breaks its rules without thought of blame,
She would go and visit the Queen to-night,
Without a shoe, with no sense of shame.

A few years hence, and the shoes will cling
Much tighter than now to those small, small
feet:

Custom will seem quite a different thing,—
She will not be unshod in the house or the
street.

She will wear her clothes as other folk do,
She will walk well shod on earth's well-worn
way;

Will she happier be than in hours she knew,
When she travelled shoeless in childhood's
days?

HERBERT TODD.



SEA-BIRDS.

NOTHING adds more to the wild grandeur and beauty of some of the sea-beaten and rocky shores of our country than the myriads of sea-fowl of all kinds which frequent the crevices of the rocks in order to rear their young. Their extraordinary numbers in regions where they are not molested almost exceeds belief. There is also among them an infinite variety of species, from the fierce and powerful Skua Gull—a blow from whose wing is dreaded even by hardy fishermen—down to the pretty little

Kittiwake, with its beautiful plumage; or the Common Tern, whose rapid wing and long forked tail have secured for it the popular name of the Seawallow.

To see these birds to advantage one ought to visit St. Kilda, that lonely island of the sea; or the more northern islands of the Shetland group; or even that ancient stronghold, the Bass Rock, within twenty miles of Edinburgh, where it has been computed that upwards of twenty thousand sea-birds

annually rear their young, and where they may be seen (when disturbed by some passing steam-ship) rising like a snowy cloud from the surface of the grim grey rock which is their home.


One variety, the great Black-backed Gull, often visits inland places near the coast, and has been known to attack and tear to pieces weakly lambs, or other defenceless creatures, which may fall in its way; if captured, this bird will fight desperately for liberty.

The Common Gull, so well known to every one, is easily tamed, and can be kept in a garden, especially if treated now and then to a dinner of fish.

The Herring or Silvery Gull is a beautiful variety, with its pure white head and soft grey back and wings.

These birds make no nest, but lay their eggs (always few in number) in a mere depression on the surface of the rock. The eggs of most sea-birds are of an olive-green colour, with large brown blotches. They are peculiar in shape, being very much pointed at one end.

GUESSING STORY.

 HAVE a round face, yet you would not say I look healthy, because it is as white as a sheet. Even after long sea-voyages, which tan and redden the faces of the sailors, I come back without a tinge of colour. I suppose I am of too nervous a temperament to be really strong, for I shake and tremble at the slightest agitation. Like many nervous people, I am peculiarly sensitive to stormy, thundery weather, which upsets my whole constitution; and though I am accustomed to travel in all parts of the world, and keep my health in every variety of climate, there is one particular spot in northern latitudes where my health becomes so disordered that I am ready to sink into the ground. There is one sign of strength in me which you might not give me credit for, and that is that occasionally I like to take a round at boxing.

My character is one of many points. As to education, I know a few of the capital letters, S and N, and one or two others. I can count up to ninety, my favourite way of doing so being to jump from ten to ten, and skip the intermediate numbers. When I have done this four times, I consider I have had enough arithmetic. Some of my family are more learned, for they even show a little knowledge of fractions. My greatest talent is for finding my way, for which reason I am often chosen as a travelling companion. Set me down in the desert, in mid-ocean, in a tangled forest, and I will always show you the direction. There are places, I will own, where I hesitate a little, and even give incorrect answers when questioned; but nobody is accurate always. If you wish me to go anywhere with you as guide, you will have to carry me, that is all, for I have no legs to walk on, and no body or arms either, for that matter,—nothing but a face. Yet though I am without hands, I am busy with my needle all day long. It is not a needle like yours, for


it has no eye, but is superior to yours one way, for it has two points.

As I like to make a good appearance, I sometimes wear a precious stone, and am occasionally seen with a ring. I consider these adornments due to my rank, for my family arms are royal ones, since I am allowed to wear the *fleur-de-lis*. You will find that on my card, but not my name.

The society I most frequent is that of sailors, travellers, and learned men. The last regard me with the deepest interest; my origin, my character, my habits, are all studied with respect and admiration. If you do not know me as well as they do, at least you ought to be able to tell my name.

EDITH C. RICKARDS.

CAST AWAY ON THE AUCKLANDS.

T is now about twenty-five years since a sailing-vessel bound from Sydney to the South Seas was stranded on one of the Aucklands, a group of uninhabited islands lying 400 miles south of New Zealand. The captain and crew managed to land, and to bring ashore with them such provisions as they had on board. It was summer-time in those latitudes, but the weather was wild, wet, and tempestuous, and their first night on the island was spent without shelter of any kind. The mate, a Frenchman, had been very ill, and altogether their position was deplorable; but what would have been the feelings of the shipwrecked men could they have known that twenty months were to come and go while still they were to be dwellers on this desert-island of the sea, uncheered by converse with their fellow-men, ever hoping, but hoping in vain, for the arrival of a friendly sail to rescue them from their unhappy position? But this was the fate that lay before them, and the narrative of this disaster, compiled from a journal kept by the captain while on the island, is one of the most interesting ever given to the world, showing as it does how a great trial was patiently endured and gallantly surmounted by the little band of shipwrecked men.

The day following the wreck, the weather being still very tempestuous, they contrived to make a tent of their mainsail and some spare canvas, which afforded them some slight protection from the weather, and for a day or two their attention was turned to the all-important work of securing the biscuits and other provisions which they had brought from the vessel; then, foreseeing that they might be long detained on the island, they cast about for material with which to construct a more durable abode. There was fortunately plenty of timber, although they found great difficulty in using it from want of proper tools. The mate's illness, too, was serious, while the poor captain was sadly oppressed by thoughts of his wife and young family whom he might never see again, and who were unprovided for. Like brave men, however, they put their trust in God, resolving not to look too far ahead, but to make

the best of the position in which they found themselves. And there were some things to be deeply grateful for; there was abundance of water, and (for the present, at least) no want of food, as seals abounded on the coast, and they had plenty of ammunition.

They now began the life of Robinson Crusoe in real earnest. Their very first care (even before building a house) was to plant a flag-staff in a commanding position, and let fly a great canvas flag, in the hope that it might be seen by some passing vessel; but the Aucklands are not in the direct line of passing vessels, and their chief hope of relief lay in the expectation that when their ship was missed their friends in Sydney might send out a search expedition for them. But weeks and months passed away, and deliverance was as far off as ever. The seals, and even the birds, were quite tame, showing that they were not accustomed to the presence of man. Strange to say, they were visited by robins, who entered the tent and ate any food offered to them. Dormice, too, soon showed themselves, and made themselves quite at home.

At last the house was built; and we can scarcely realise what an amount of patience and energy must have been bestowed upon that rough log cabin. But it seems to have been wonderfully comfortable and roomy. It was twenty-four feet by sixteen, with a complete stone chimney, a boarded floor, with rough seats, table, and frames for beds: and, as the weather all along had been wet and stormy, the first care of the poor exiles was to light a roaring fire and dry their wet and ragged clothing. After the house was finished, they found that the wind blew through the timber walls; and, to remedy this, they resolved to thatch the house all round, as well as on the top, with dried grass. This involved the labour of cutting and drying the material; and when we read that 5000 bundles of grass, each weighing a pound, were required to finish this work, we are able to estimate in some small degree the energy, patience, and industry displayed by these men during their long imprisonment on a desert island. For we must not forget that, while so patiently and laboriously constructing a house for themselves, they had at the same time to engage in a daily hunt for food, while the weather continued to be tempestuous in the extreme. There were fortunately plenty of seals, but they were not always to be found in the same place. Two out of the five men had to take the boat and row here and there among the islands in search of them; then, when found, it was no easy task to kill and convey them home. All this time, too, the axe had to be kept going to supply them with necessary firewood. Often did these poor fellows fling themselves down at night on their comfortless beds so utterly worn out, that it seemed almost as though they would die of sheer fatigue before the dawning of another miserable day. And what they must have suffered from depression of spirits, as they thought of home and friends, whom they were never likely to see again! But, fortunately for them all, both the captain and mate were men of superior character, who, by their good example, supported the courage and kept up the spirits of the common seamen. And

this must have been no easy task, for long confinement to an exclusively animal diet had proved hurtful to the health of all, the captain himself being very poorly, and often quite prostrated. The mate, as we have said, was a Frenchman, and having that elasticity of spirit which distinguishes his countrymen, his lively sallies often cheered the hearts of his fellow-sufferers. He was great in the cooking line, and when his day came to attend to this department he used to pride himself on producing four courses at dinner—namely, stewed seal, fried liver, roasted fish, and a dessert of mussels. But some other kind of food was absolutely necessary, and the whole island was carefully examined in search of leaves or roots. This resulted in the discovery of a root which, when sliced and fried in seal-oil, formed a useful addition to their bill of fare. It could not be called pleasant, as it tasted like sawdust; but it had a certain sweetness, and was not unwholesome.

Winter was now upon them, and winter in these latitudes is dreary in the extreme. (The degree of cold was not so great as they expected, but no words could describe the winds that raved about them, the squalls of sleet, and the steady, persistent rain. Their prospects, which had never been very bright, were every day growing darker. They began to suffer from the want of fresh meat, as the seals more rarely came to the island, and the days were too short to let them go far from home in search of them. The men grew despairing and sulky, but the captain and mate were equal to the occasion. The captain, though far from well, occupied the tedious hours of darkness by teaching his men to read, and by telling them stories; while on Sundays he always read prayers, and also passages of Scripture, which (he says in his journal) he expounded to the best of his poor ability. The mate, too, was not idle; though suffering from an abscess on the hand, he began shoemaking, using sealskin for the upper part, and old boots picked to pieces for the soles. In this praiseworthy manner these heroic men contrived to get through the long, dark, miserable winter.

They had landed on the island early in January. June had been their mid-winter, and now they were approaching the month of October, when they might hope for a rescue, if, indeed, a rescue was ever to be theirs. It is pitiful to read the captain's journal at this time; his intense anxiety; his terrible restlessness; how he stood at the outlook, scanning the ocean, till his eyes were bloodshot, and how no ship ever came! Then his heart grew bitter within him. Surely a rescue ship might have been sent? Had they no friends to care whether they died like starved dogs on these miserable islands? But he did not long indulge in such an evil state of mind as this. He goes on to describe how he and the mate went away together, and climbed to the top of a hill to look about them and to talk over their position.

We can almost think we see the two friends: both in clothes so tattered that they scarcely held together, both thin, and emaciated, and covered with boils, the result of unsuitable and meagre food. We can imagine how they opened up their hearts to each other away from the men, who, being less educated, required to be guided and treated almost like children.

(Concluded in our next.)



Cast away on the Auckland Islands.



New Tenants.

THE NEW TENANTS.

OUR cat, she had five little ones,
 An every person knew;
 Their names were 'Flossie,' 'Snowball,' 'Smut,'
 With 'Kit,' and little 'Mew.'

One day on foraging intent,
 She leaped upon a cage,
 But after sniffing round a while
 Vexed thoughts her mind engage.

'How very sad it is,' thought she,
 'That every single linnet
 Has been removed before we came!
 The cage has nothing in it!

However, I have dined to-day,
 So now for quiet rest;
 My children, you may go and play,
 For frolic suits you best.'

With folded paws she laid her down,
 And meditative look,
 While every wicked little cat
 Its own diversion took.

Said Snowball to his brother Kit,
 'Get out of this—now do;
 For Smut and I, we live in here,
 And there's no room for you!

And Smut feels rather sick to-day,
 He told me so just now;
 So off you go, again I say,
 Or there will be a row.

And Kit, just leave that stick alone;
 Come, drop it now at once;
 Of all the cats I ever knew
 You are the greatest dunce.'

Cries little Smut, 'Quick, Snowball, quick!
 Or you will be too late;
 Here's sister Flossie pushing in;
 Come quick, and shut the gate.'

'How strange it seems, when you and I,
 Dear Snowball, are so good,
 That other cats should be so pert,
 Inquisitive and rude!

Said mother Puss, 'This summer day
 I thought to lie at rest,
 While my dear children romp and play,
 Which seems to suit them best.

But really, how they snarl and fight,
 And kick, and growl, and riot!
 Ah, well! when they are old like me
 They'll like a little quiet.'

D. B.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 236.)

CHAPTER III.



BETWEEN the two lads who had resolved to stand by one another in their early battles of school life there was a great difference. Norman Baylis was older and of more robust frame than his new-found friend. He came of a large family, and therefore had never been in any sense spoilt. At most sports he could hold his own with boys of his own years, and his sharpest critic could not have denied him plenty of courage and daring. It was in the finer parts of a character that he was wanting. Moral courage was a thing he neither had nor understood, and amongst his brothers and sisters it was a matter of common agreement that Norman 'had a temper of his own.'

Herbert Battersley had been cast in a very different mould. Reared quietly at home, and hitherto without experience of the rough-and-tumble life so many schoolboys lead, his disposition showed too much timidity and lack of enterprise ever to make him a ready favourite amongst his fellows. But in one point he excelled most of these—he was conscientious to a fault, frequently accusing himself for errors which an over-sensitive nature imagined. Once sure of what was right, nothing in the way of persuasion or force could turn him from the path.

But we have left them at the supper-table, and the first night at a new school is usually too great an ordeal for us to leave their doings undescribed.

The two friends sat next to each other at a long table, at each end of which a junior master presided. The sixth were privileged to take this meal in their own studies, this title being given to some half-a-dozen compartments, each of which was shared by two of these worthies.

The company at the long table was, therefore, confined to the younger boys, the fifth being dignified by a table to themselves.

Baylis and Battersley found themselves amongst such the same boys as at tea, and at once entered into conversation with several lads of their own age. Amongst those most inclined for talk was a bright little fellow who from his size might have been taken for little more than twelve, but who was in reality some years older. He began upon Battersley with an air of patronage mixed with kindness.

'Where are you going to sleep? do you know yet?'

'No,' was the reply.

'Nobody got his room yet? Then it will all come out after supper. I only hope some beds will turn in with us; we are in a bad way in our room, only seven against eleven. If they'll only send us four or five we shall be able to pay those other fellows out finely.'

'What have they been doing, then?'

'Doing? Why, no end. But you'll soon find out if you're in a room where the beggarly Blues have the best of it.'

Green, who was within hearing, at once took up the speaker.

'What do you mean by calling the Blues beggarly? I'm a Blue, and I'll take it out of you if we're going to be in the same room.'

'All right! fire away!' was the cheerful response.

'Bravo, Tommie!' called out another adherent lower down the table, the ardent Red being no other than that Tommie Tosstop who had furnished the essay on the advantages of Blues and Reds.

'Silence in the middle of the table!' called out one of the masters, the disputants having forgotten the necessity for talking in undertones.

The end of the meal, which was succeeded by prayers, put a stop to further disagreement.

When the new boys' names were placed on the bedroom lists it was found that Baylis, Battersley, Choundy, Green, and Freckles, were all to sleep in what was called the long dormitory, in which most of the lads in the middle of the school were accommodated. Thither they repaired in a crowd, which became somewhat disorderly when no longer under their masters' eyes.

But once in the room it was observed that the old boys began to show some signs of uneasiness. Young Tommie in particular sat upon his bed with a most doleful air, which did not escape the notice of the impetuous Freckles.

'I say, has anything gone wrong?' he asked.

'Oh, no, of course not! But something will though, soon.'

The others in the room, observing this dialogue, drew near to listen.

'Why, what's the matter?' pursued Freckles.

'Nothing just now; but there will be soon.'

'Well, out with it, my young oracle!'

'You'll find out soon enough. It's only those big louts, the fifth and the sixth.'

'What about them?'

'They'll be in here—some of them at any rate—in about ten minutes, to break in the new chums, and keep the old ones agoing, too. And it isn't fair: they're always down on me, and I won't stand it!'

'It's a regular swindle,' continued Parker, another old boy; 'they always come in here routing us up, and old Swanage lets them do as they like the first night.'

A chorus of voices assented to the injustice of the custom.

'Look here,' said Baylis; 'let's keep them out.'

'How?' cried a dozen. 'There's no lock on the door.'

'Barricade it with bedsteads. I've got a couple of gimlets in a bag amongst my things, and they'll help to keep the door close.'

'Hurrah!' cried Freckles. 'Let's begin at once.'

'But don't you think they'll make it all the worse for us afterwards?' suggested Battersley.

'Pooh! Coward!' said one boy.

'Don't care if they do,' said half-a-dozen others.

'We'll teach them not to try any games on with us!' cried the redoubtable Green.

The determination being thus arrived at, Blues and Reds worked together with common consent, for there was no time to be lost.

Baylis found his precious gimlets, and with them screwed the door fast. Two bedsteads lengthwise, with a third across between them, were then placed against the door, reaching from it to the opposite wall, and so jamming it fast.

'Hurrah!' said Tommie Tosstop, when the work was done. 'Now let us get to bed, and then if they make any row we shall be able to prove it wasn't our fault.'

They undressed rapidly, said their brief schoolboy prayers, like the honest-hearted fellows they were, and then scrambled into bed, laughing heartily at the spectacle presented by the three conspirators whose beds had been dragged out of place to form the barricade.

All lay in silence for a few minutes. It seemed a quarter of an hour, and Green's fears were speedily aroused. His bed was the one placed across the ends of the other two, and rising upon one elbow he said, 'Look here, I believe this is all a go. You're trying to sell me, I know you are. My name's Green, but —'

However, he got no further, for an ominous sound of slipped footsteps was heard in the corridor.

'Keep quiet,' said Tommie Tosstop. 'Don't answer at first.'

A hand turned the latch of their door. Then somebody said in a low voice, 'Halloo! This door sticks. It didn't use to.'

The small boys quailed. It was the croaking voice of Bruin Grant.

The door was pushed—once, twice, three times. But it held firm.

'The young beggars have barred themselves in, that's about it,' Nicholson spoke this time. Bruin was furious at the idea. He knocked at the door with his fist.

'Come in!' said the valiant Tommie. 'Come in, what are you standing out in the cold for?'

'Come in, you young beggars!' returned the bully. 'Yes, I will, and no mistake. Now then, open this door!'

'We're all gone to bed, and we shall catch cold if we get out. Don't you think you will, too?'

'I know what you'll catch, and that's a jolly good hiding. I know your squeaking young voice.' (As a matter of fact he did not; but bullies are rarely particular about telling the truth.)

'Now then,' said Nicholson, 'open this door, and have it over.'

'Now then,' said Tommie, 'get away from that door, and have your night's rest.'

'Will you open this door?' demanded Nicholson, in a rage.

'Will you go off to bed?' replied Tommie from his position at the top of the barricade.

No further questions were asked, but a whispered consultation took place outside. Some of the sixth, who had no great interest in the exhibition, were for going quietly back to bed, and letting the youngsters off this time.

But Nicholson, Grant, and some others, were against such an act. Whilst, therefore, one or two went off to bed, the rest made up their minds to burst open the door, if it could be done without arousing the house.



"'Come in!' said the valiant Tommie."

Two of the stoutest at once placed their shoulders against the door and pushed.

Their efforts were observed from within, and to encourage them, Freckles started the sailors' chant—'Yo, heave ho!' But although thus putting a brave face upon it, their hearts sank as they saw the gimlets begin to start, and heard the straining of the panels. But the way in which the beds had been

arranged between the door and the wall made it impossible for the door itself to give way. A panel might have been kicked out, but that was altogether too noisy a plan. However, the invaders were not disposed to give way in a hurry, and for some time kept renewing their efforts, interspersing their attack upon the door with many promises of what the young rascals within might expect upon the morrow.



The little fellow was roughly handled.

At last the attacking party desisted, consulted for a short time in whispers, and then began to go away. Bruin could not forbear a parting shot.

'Young Tom Tosstop, do you hear me?'

'Yes,' replied Tommie very meekly, and in his natural voice.

'Do you remember the licking I gave you last December?'

'Yes.'

'Then look out for another like it to-morrow. Now I'm off to bed.'

When the sound of the last footstep had died away, the rebels sat up in their beds, and looked at each other by the moonlight which came through the windows.

'We are in for it to-morrow,' said Baylis.

'Yes, I know,' said Tommie; 'but we should have had it to-night instead, so it's all the same. We may as well have some fun for our money.'

'Well, any way,' said Choundy, who gave one the impression of an easy-going lad, who would take whatever came without complaining of his lot, 'as they're gone, we may as well take down the barricade and settle off to sleep.'

'I suppose so,' said Tommie, with a rather doleful countenance. It was one thing to start a rebellion when everybody's blood was fired with indignation at the expected onslaught, and quite another to carry the thing on to the end, whatever that might

be. It was no pleasant matter to lie down quietly in the expectation of a sound thrashing on the morrow, perhaps to be accompanied by such refinements of torture as the minds of Bruin and his assistants could devise.

(To be continued.)

A TOUCHING SCENE.



ANY years ago, on board an English ship, a little ragged boy, aged nine years, was discovered on the fourth day of the voyage out from Liverpool to New York, and carried before the captain. When questioned as to his object of being stowed away, and who brought him on board, the boy, who had a beautiful sunny face, and eyes that looked like the very mirrors of truth, replied that his stepfather did it, because he could not afford to keep him, nor to pay his passage out to Halifax, where he had an aunt who was well off, and to whose house he was going.

The captain did not believe the story, in spite of the winning face and truthful accents of the boy. He had seen too much of stowaways to be easily deceived by them, he said; and it was his firm belief that the

boy had been brought on board and provided with food by the sailors.

The little fellow was very roughly handled in consequence. Day by day he was questioned, but always with the same result. He did not know a sailor on board, and his father alone had hidden him, and given him the food which he ate.

At last the captain, wearied by the boy's persistence in the same story, seized him one day by the collar, and dragging him to the fore, told him that unless he would tell the truth in ten minutes from that time he would hang him from the yard-arm.

He then made him sit under it on the deck. All around him were the passengers and sailors of the midway watch, and in front of him stood the cruel captain, with his watch in his hand, and the other officers of the ship by his side. It was a touching sight to see the pale, sorrowful face of that noble boy, his head erect, his beautiful eyes bright through the tears that rose in them. When eight minutes had fled, the captain told him he had but two minutes to live, and advised him to speak the truth and save his life; but he replied with the utmost simplicity and sincerity by asking the captain if he might pray.

The man said nothing, but nodded his head and turned as pale as a ghost, and shook with trembling like a reed with the wind.

And there, all eyes turned on him, the brave little fellow, this poor waif whom society owned not, and whose own stepfather could not care for him—there he knelt with clasped hands, and eyes turned to heaven, while he repeated the Lord's Prayer, and prayed the Lord Jesus to take him to heaven. When he ended his simple prayer sobs broke from strong, hard hearts, as the captain sprang forward to the boy, and clasped him to his bosom, and kissed him and blessed him, and told him how sincerely he believed his story, and how glad he was that he had been brave enough to face death and be willing to sacrifice his life for the truth of his word.

STRATOCLES AND THE BARBER.

WE are told of Stratocles, that he persuaded the Athenians to have a great public rejoicing for a victory at sea, although he himself knew they had really been defeated. At last the truth came out. Stratocles was seized, and would have been put to death but for a clever defence.

'Have I done you any injury?' he said to the angry people. 'Is it not owing to me that you have spent three days in the pleasures of victory?'

He was at once released.

Very different was the fate of a certain barber, who received from one of his customers news that the Athenians had been defeated in Sicily. He at once ran from his shop and spread the news throughout the city. Being called upon to give his authority, he could say little or nothing about the stranger. The unhappy barber was thereupon condemned as a spreader of false news, and suffered great tortures until the disaster was confirmed.

A. R. B.

CAST AWAY ON THE AUCKLANDS.

(Concluded from page 239.)

THE result of their deliberation was that they should make an effort at boat-building out of the material afforded by the wreck of the schooner, which still lay stranded on the beach. It was a daring resolve, with their poor tools and failing strength, to construct a vessel large enough to carry five men over four hundred miles of wild and tempestuous sea. But anything was better than remaining in their present miserable condition, and the boat-building was begun. Their intention was to build a cutter of ten tons, using the mainmast of the schooner as a keel. The mate proved as good a blacksmith as he was a shoemaker and a cook; he got up a forge, made some charcoal, and made bolts and nails out of the old iron which lay as ballast in the wreck of the schooner.

But we need not pursue the account of their anxious labours, for the building of the cutter had soon to be abandoned from lack of tools necessary for such a work. The despair of the men at this failure was highly dangerous, for nothing is so terrible in its effect on the character as utter despair. It seems to turn men from kindly beings, with brotherly sympathy for each other, into ferocious creatures, regardless of God and man, regardless of duty, and of everything that raises man above the lower animals. But the captain was again equal to this new emergency. Seeing the gloomy despair of the men, he at once announced his intention of patching up the small boat which they already had, and launching forth in her, to sink or swim—whatever might be the will of God concerning them. One and all declared that they would go with him and share one common lot. It did, indeed, seem a desperate scheme, and the captain knew well that the whole five of them could not possibly embark in so small a dingy; but he wisely said nothing at first, but he went on with their new plan of repairing the boat, leaving the men to find out for themselves that at least two of their number must consent to be left behind, while the other three risked themselves on the stormy ocean. The boat was a dingy, old and shaky, and much work was required before she could be at all seaworthy.

But before proceeding further in our narrative, it may be interesting to young readers to know what kind of animals were found on the Auckland Islands. Had these shipwrecked seamen visited these islands as naturalists, with leisure to explore the woods, they might possibly have made interesting discoveries, but they had no time for work of this kind, and the animals they did meet with were very few in number. Two dogs had been seen one day at a distance, devouring the carcase of a seal—these had, probably, been left behind by some whaling-ship; but the creatures had become quite wild, and fled on the first appearance of the men. They were seen only once again, when they were barking at some creature sitting on a tree, which (from the description of it in the captain's journal) seems to have been a species of racoon. They never, however, came near the log-house.

No other quadrupeds, except mice, were seen,

except, strange to say, a young cat, which was captured by one of the men and tied up in the house. It was an ordinary domestic cat, though quite wild. Its appearance on the island may be accounted for in the same manner as the dogs. Possibly, a mother cat had been left by some ship, and this little kit might have been one of her descendants. Pussy became quite tame, and seemed willing enough to stay with her captors. No other cats were ever seen, nor does the journal state what became of this one. We have already said that robins visited the sailors on their first arrival on the island; whether or not they were our own familiar friends does not seem clear; the captain does not seem to have been much of a student of bird-ways. But they sang sweetly, wore a pretty red vest, and we may be quite sure were warmly welcomed by the poor castaways. A species of green parrot also appeared, and a nest with young ones was secured; there were also flocks of wild ducks, although they do not seem to have made nests on the island. Possibly they only visited it at certain times in search of small fish which abounded in the creeks. The captain's journal, however, on all these points is hazy and uncertain. We may well believe that more important subjects occupied his mind, and filled his journal; and when one has a limited supply of paper, and only seal's blood for ink, many interesting subjects might not be recorded.

But we must now return to our poor adventurers, whom we left just when they had found it impossible to build a cutter, and when they had resolved, rather than die of cold, disease, or starvation, to patch up their little boat and launch forth on the wild and stormy sea. As it was found after examination of the boat that it was necessary to enlarge as well as strengthen her, she was lengthened three feet, and raised one foot higher, the work being got through with all speed on account of the captain's impatience to start by April 1st, which would be late in their autumn. The mate worked especially hard—so many bolts and nails being required to keep the crazy little vessel together that we are told the midnight hour often found him still at his forge, and when we remember that by this time the whole band were suffering severely from want of food, we must admire his energy and courage.

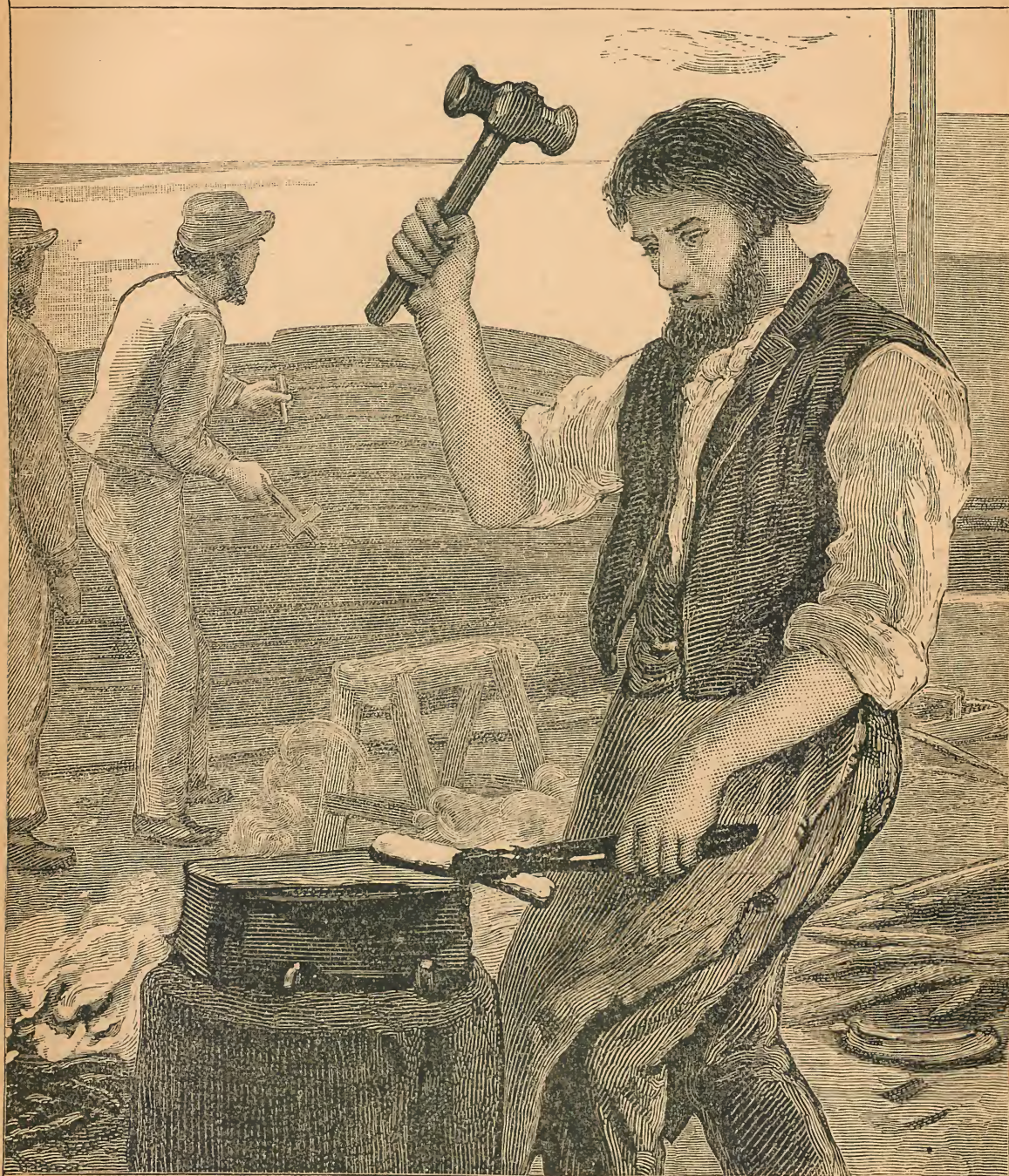
Towards the end of March, the captain began to keep anxious watch over the weather; the boat being nearly completed, he felt that they should launch away as soon as there was a moderate calm. At this time we find recorded in his journal, 'The sea booms and the wind howls, so that my flesh creeps to hear it.' Brave, patient heart! he confides his fears to the silent pages of his journal, but he will not dishearten his half-starved companions. No; to them he maintains a bolder bearing, assuring them that they have now good prospect of getting away, and that even though they might never reach the abodes of civilised men, a grave in the wild sea was better than to die one by one on the island. And so the days wore on: the boat was ready at last, and so were the crew, when down came a deluge of snow, followed by a raving tempest of wind, while four out of the five men were prostrated by sudden and severe illness. The launch was postponed, and for other two miserable months these five men dragged on

their existence, almost delirious with pain, and living almost entirely on roots and cold water. We need not dwell upon this, the saddest experiences that they had yet gone through, but pass on to the 27th of June, midwinter, when, once more being able to stand on their feet, and finding the weather somewhat favourable, they launched the boat.

Our narrative would be too long were we to detail the many miserable experiences they yet had to go through before they escaped from their island-prison. It is sufficient to say that, finding it impossible all to go together, two of the seamen consented to remain behind, the others solemnly promising to have them rescued as soon as possible. The voyage to Port Adventure occupied about a week; the passage was a miserable one; they were driven by a furious gale the whole way, while the boat leaked so much that the pump was going almost continuously. The journal records that the captain scarcely touched food the whole time, only drinking a little water, while so great was their danger that he stood on his feet for five days and nights, holding on to a rope with one hand and pumping with the other—the mate and the third man meanwhile relieving each other at the helm. We need not wonder when we read that on arriving at Port Adventure they fell down almost as though they had been dead at the feet of the astonished and sympathising inhabitants, who lost no time in attending to their wants. They were able to eat with difficulty, but the luxury of a bath and a bed, who can describe? Meanwhile, we may be sure their poor companions still on the Aucklands were not forgotten, though a series of unfortunate events prevented them from being rescued so soon as was at first expected. The captain returned to the island with the rescue party, but in a very different vessel from the poor little dingy which had carried him away from its desolate shores. Nearly six weeks had passed—weeks of miserable anxiety to the two prisoners still on the island, but their long trial was now over. After an affecting meeting, during which the rescued men could scarcely keep from tears, they were hurried on board the schooner, and set down to a meal of fish, bread and butter, with tea, which, to men who had been thankful to feed on mice, must have seemed luxury indeed.

We need not pursue any further the history of these men; but, before closing, we would ask young readers to observe, that most probably all these shipwrecked sailors would have died in their island-prison had it not been for the good qualities exhibited by the captain and the mate, the steady courage and endurance of the one, the cheerfulness and industry of the other, and the unselfishness of both. These qualities ought to be cultivated by every one of us, for who can tell in what circumstances we may yet find ourselves placed? A railway accident, a shipwreck, a house on fire, might be the experience of any one, when panic or selfishness might greatly increase the danger of our position and of those with us. Above all, when placed in any difficulty we should cherish (as these men seem to have done) steady faith and trust in God, for that is the best preservative against unworthy fears and selfishness in times of danger.

D. B. MCKEAN.



The Shipwrecked Men patching up the little Boat.



"Tosstop inserted the point of his pen into Bruin's person."

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 245.)

O two or three of the ringleaders got out of bed, and began to restore things to their usual state.

They had not gone far when Baylis was seized with an idea.

'Stop a minute,' he said. 'Don't be in such a hurry about that. Suppose they come back again?'

'But they won't,' said Choudy. 'Don't you remember Bruin finished by saying he was off to bed?'

'That's what makes me think they may come back again,' said Battersley. 'He needn't have told us that unless he wanted us to take particular notice of it.'

'Just so,' said Tommie. 'I think there's something in it after all. It's getting too late for them to carry on the tossing and the rest of it as usual; but Nicholson and Bruin, and two or three more, would like to come in and give us a licking for this. What shall we do?'

'Turn in as we are,' said one.

'That will never do,' answered Tommie. 'When Chips came to call us in the morning he would find himself barred out, and there might be no end of a fuss.'

'I propose that the fellows whose beds are in the barricade keep their eyes open a bit longer, and the rest can drop off to sleep as soon as they like.'

This was the suggestion of Baylis, whose bed formed one of the three, Green and Tosstop being the other victims.

Most of the boys agreed to this proposal, and were soon asleep. A few resolved to keep awake for a time to see if anything did happen, but found this more easily said than done, and were soon snoring in rivalry with the others. Battersley alone was determined to keep watch as long as Baylis did, and therefore sat up in bed with coat and waistcoat on. These four, being near each other, conferred together in whispers.

'Why do they let this kind of thing go on?' asked Baylis of the more experienced Tommie.

'Well, it never was a nuisance, they say, till Nicholson and Grant got their hands into it. The sixth and a few out of the fifth used to come in and tumble the new chums about a bit—initiating they called it—but nobody was hurt and nobody cared. Then when these fellows got up they began to make it as prickly as they could, tossing the light ones in a blanket—that's why I'm always pitched on, and licking with towels any fellows who kick up a fuss.'

'Why doesn't somebody try to get it stopped?'

'How can they? We couldn't go to Swanage with a face as long as one's arm, and split on the fellows, although they are bullies. We must grin and bear it. They'll take it out of us to-morrow. I advise you to hang about near the house, where

they might be seen if they tried on any of their little games.'

'What shall we do if nobody turns up again to-night?'

'Oh, we must hold out for another half-an-hour, and then turn in ourselves. What's that?'

All four listened, and steps, apparently those of one person only, were heard.

They held their breath. The steps came nearer and nearer—and passed.

'What a donkey I am!' said Tommie. 'It's Wilkins, the third-form master. He sleeps at the end of the corridor. They daren't do much, any way, to-night, now he's up.'

Another period of waiting ensued. But the four watchers must have become very sleepy, for Tommie came to himself with a jerk as somebody turned the latch and pushed the door from without. A second attempt was made, but without result, and then stealthy footsteps were heard passing down the corridor.

'It's all right now,' said Tommie. 'It was a wily dodge not to say anything this time. They'll go back and tell the rest that we have turned in with the barricade up, and so they'll think it no good trying again.'

Acting on this belief the four watchers restored the beds to their proper places, waking one or two sleepers, and sending them comfortably off again with the tidings. Then they themselves lay down to sleep, not without some very gloomy forebodings as to what might be in store for them on the morrow.

CHAPTER IV.

THE heroes of the exploit recorded in the last chapter woke on the following morning with an uneasy sense of something hanging over them. What that something was a very little consideration sufficed to make plain. Young Tom Tosstop encouraged his forces during the operation of dressing by bidding them remember, that if they were true to each other the secret of the barring-out and its authors need never be known, and so they might secure themselves against interruption on the first nights of many other terms yet to come. And as for any lickings they might get, 'Why,' said Tommie, throwing back his shoulders, and rising to every inch of his height, 'we must bear them like men.'

Dressing was completed in great quietude, an atmosphere of peace seeming to pervade the room. It was, they all felt, only the calm before the storm which was to break on their unfortunate heads. Before they went down Tommie had one more piece of advice to give.

'I don't suppose anybody wants a licking if he can get out of it, so I'll tell you what we must do. Until the thick of this has blown over we must keep together out of school, and only hang about before the Doctor's windows or thereabouts. If Bruin Grant tries his old games on me, I'm going to yell this time. I can take a licking with anybody, but I'm not going to stand being held by two great louts whilst another pinches and pricks you. I advise you all to follow my lead.'

'Why not show fight?' said Freckles.

'That's it!' said Baylis, scrubbing his ruddy face with the towel; 'show fight like a man.'

'I've tried that,' said Tommie, 'and it's no go unless Bruin tries it on by himself. We could easily settle him, I know; but there's no chance of his doing that.'

Armed, therefore, with this advice, the company finished their dressing, and went down to prayers at the summons of the bell.

All the school took breakfast together, and the disappointed raiders of the previous night cast some threatening glances towards the table at which the third and the fourth were sitting. Although these looks struck terror into the hearts of some of the younger lads, who had really taken very little part in the adventure, they produced no great effect on the ringleaders. Tom in particular returned them with looks of such meek and unaffected innocence that Bruin's wrath knew no bounds.

He took occasion, when breakfast was over, and the several forms were dispersing to their places, to pass Tommie, and whisper in his ear, 'Won't you get it hot!' This threat he accompanied by a sly pinch, as a slight foretaste of what might be expected.

But Tosstop was in no mood to be trifled with; so, feeling he might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb, he hastily turned, and inserted the point of his pen into Bruin's person.

The latter sprang round with a suppressed yell, which caught the second master's ear.

'Grant! creating a disturbance again! Stay in from twelve till one.'

Here was a triumph for the juniors—their enemy safely caged during the morning play-hour! If Nicholson and Grant were not abroad, they felt sure that not one of the others would care to follow up the matter, although they might be ready enough to help at their instigation. The lordly Nicholson, surveying them over his monstrous collar, really seemed superior to such a degrading task as thrashing small boys. But the elder boys knew him to be as cruel as he was imposing.

The morning passed, and the play-hour came. Following the advice of the sagacious Tom, most of the juniors went no further than the strip of playground on which the Doctor's windows looked out. Green in particular planted himself directly before them, and scarcely stirred a step.

They felt sure that manoeuvre was observed, because Nicholson was seen haranguing some of Bruin Grant's usual companions at the other side of the playground.

Presently a small boy came up with a message.

'Tosstop, Monsell says will you come and join in their big ring behind the Fives' Courts?'

Tom was a distinguished player at marbles, and he felt keenly the being cut off from his usual resort. But his suspicions were aroused.

'Any of the big fellows been round there this morning?' he asked, in a tone that implied indifference to the answer.

'Oh, yes! Nicholson and Curtis were round there just now talking to Monsell.'

'All right, Teddie, you can go back and say I shall be particularly engaged to-day in this quarter of the playground.'

'Nicholson was at the bottom of that, I know,' said Tommie, when the messenger was gone; 'but he didn't bring it off this time.'

No further attempt was made to draw the ringleaders of the party from their place of safety, and afternoon school found them rejoicing in the hope that the same tactics carried on for a day or two would keep them safe until the wrath of their elders had in a measure gone down. They could not help fearing, however, that the recent punishment of Bruin would probably increase his resolution to have revenge. But it was no secret that Leslie and some others in the sixth looked at the custom, as then carried on, with no favourable eye.

'Besides,' as Freckles argued, when a group were considering the situation just before afternoon school, 'if we can make a stand now, and, at the cost of one good licking, save ourselves and the third and fourth from ever being worried again, we shall have done something. It's a kind of working for posterity, you see.'

'Bother posterity!' said Green, who had found the morning's confinement to one corner of the playground rather irksome; 'I don't see what posterity has to do with it. They don't help us; why should we be licked for them? I'm going to look out for my own skin.'

'It's a jolly thick one, that's some consolation,' said Freckles.

'And not fit for tanning, he thinks,' observed Tommie. 'But never mind about that; I'm for making a good stand this time, and anybody can join in who likes.'

This proposal met with general approval from the group then assembled, which included the bolder spirits of the room; but was received with silence by Green and one or two of the younger lads, who were not disposed to look much beyond the present.

During the school-hours of that afternoon, Tom Tosstop, who was not usually remarkable for close attention to his lessons, although very far from a dull boy, was observed to be intent on his books and exercises to a degree never before witnessed. Ordinary attractions failed altogether to draw him from them. When the new boy Choundy, who was something of an artist, drew a picture of Bruin Grant as a grizzly bear safely caged, and passed it along the desk, Tommie became quite forgetful of his duties on such an occasion, and forgot to send it on. But, what was more remarkable for a lad of his intelligence, when called up for the first lesson, he knew very little about it, notwithstanding his close application, and very narrowly escaped being kept in to learn it again. This state of things was noticed by his fellows, who were all of opinion that trouble was preying on Tommie's mind, and that he was suffering a severe relapse after his late excitement.

Impressed with this conviction, Freckles and some other of the ringleaders approached him as soon as school was over, in order to raise his spirits.

(To be continued.)





HAMBURGH FOWLS.

OF these there are several kinds, such as the black, the golden-pencilled, the silver-pencilled, the golden-spangled, and the silver-spangled; all of which are very beautiful birds. They should have red-rose combs, faces, and wattles, with opaque-white deaf ear. This last ought to be very clear

and distinct, without a shade of red. Beak and legs of a slaty blue. They are excellent layers, generally laying more than two hundred or more eggs in the year. They thrive best when they have a large run of meadow and copse. Being non-sitters, hens of other varieties are required to hatch the chickens, which are rather difficult to rear. H. W.



The Death of Luco's Nephew.

ANTONIO LUCO, THE BRIGAND CHIEF.

THE Italian brigand has often been regarded as a superior kind of being, fierce and revengeful perhaps towards those who interfered with him, but capable of performing deeds of romantic generosity

especially towards women and children. Yet when the truth is known about brigands we find that many of them were monsters of cruelty, while all of them were vagabonds, thieves, and assassins, aiming only at plunder and murder.

Italy is a country favourable to brigandage. Its

great mountain-passes afford safe shelter for those turbulent spirits who defy the law, while, from lack of roads, travelling (even if it had been safe) was in many districts almost impossible. When people were compelled to traverse such districts, the only safe plan was to obtain, at great cost, an escort from the banditti themselves.

These bandits lodged in some dark forest, or in some cave deeply hidden in the recesses of the mountains. When it pleased them, they would sally forth and attack houses, murder the inmates, destroy property, and carry off with them to the mountains any person for whom a ransom could be immediately demanded. If the friends of the captive refused to pay the sum agreed upon, his life was certain to be forfeited. Such captures used to be of frequent occurrence. Such a dreadful state of matters in the nineteenth century would have been impossible in any other European country than Italy; but there, brigandage was the natural effect of utter misgovernment. Men, reckless and unprincipled, but bold and energetic, learned to associate themselves in bands to carry out for their own benefit the same system of terrorism which prevailed around them.

This seems to have been the origin of the terrible Camorra, or bandit association. These men held regular meetings, their chief possessing absolute authority; if he commanded them to commit murder they dared not hesitate, otherwise they themselves would be immediately shot, or stabbed by the ready knife of their next neighbour. But the revolution of 1860 among other changes broke the tremendous power of the banditti, who were gradually captured and destroyed, many of them committing suicide rather than yield themselves up to the patriotic party. A few particulars from the life of a famous bandit of these times may be interesting.

Antonio Luco had in early life been a shepherd on the mountains, but from his youth he had craved after a life of adventure. When the disturbances broke out in 1860 he joined the revolt, and soon distinguished himself, especially by his wanton cruelty. In his native state he committed such atrocities that his name was heard with terror by the population all round. He was, however, a skilful leader of the brigands, and he had great influence among them, being able by their assistance for a length of time to defy the troops sent against him. On one occasion he was surprised by the military, and three of his followers lost their lives. Luco having some reason to suppose that he had been betrayed into the hands of the soldiers by a certain villager whom he knew, he suddenly appeared at this village, and surrounding it commanded every man to be brought before him. Twenty unfortunate creatures taken from their labour in the fields were led trembling before the savage bandit, but the suspected man was not among them. Enraged at this failure, and still burning with the desire of revenge, he killed in cold blood every one of those poor husbandmen, and set fire to their homesteads, several women and children perishing in the flames. Many other stories might be told of this ruthless man, but they would be a mere catalogue of horrors, from which the mind would fain turn to pleasanter themes. But cruel and blood-thirsty as

Luco was, he still had one tender feeling in his heart. This was his intense love for his young nephew, whom he had trained to his own dreadful life. What this youth might have been under better auspices it is hard to say, but his life was a short one. He was only in his nineteenth year when he met with his death during a skirmish with the troops, in which Luco himself had his right hand almost blown away. He was at this time growing old in years as well as in crimes; and when, regardless of his own sufferings, he crawled to the place where his nephew lay in the agonies of death, what remorse may have filled the heart of this savage man? This skirmish was almost the last in which Antonio Luco was engaged, for a few months after this he fell into the hands of the military, and after a fair trial he was condemned and executed. The circumstances of his capture are interesting.

Among the steep rocks which rise above a stream flowing at the foot of a dark mountain range was a cavern, spacious enough to protect within its recesses upwards of sixty horses, but of which the entrance was so narrow that only one person could enter at a time. The existence of this gloomy cave was known to few; but Luco, during his career as a shepherd, had discovered it, and often sought its shelter during the terrible storms which sometimes burst over these regions.

In this wild place he and his followers, fifteen in number, finding themselves hard-pressed by the enemy, had taken refuge, having first provisioned it with an abundant store of food and wine, besides necessary ammunition.

But the soldiers, having obtained a clue to his place of concealment, proceeded with due caution towards the spot.

Everything was silent, not even a breath of wind stirred the foliage of the leaves, as the first of the troops came in sight; but in an instant the crack of a rifle was heard: a shot from the interior of the cavern had laid low the first intruder upon this robber's den.

The troops then withdrew out of bullet range and consulted together. Finding it impossible to attack the brigands successfully, owing to the narrow mouth of the cave, the military now resolved to starve out the miscreants, which, of course, was just a question of time.

The reckless bandits continued to hold out for nearly a fortnight, singing and dancing all the time, as though quite indifferent to their dreadful position.

At length, their provisions failing, they rushed forth, one after another, pistol in hand, firing wildly upon their enemies, and as they closed in fight, using their long and glittering knives with deadly effect. Several of the soldiers were killed; but their duty was done—the ferocious band of brigands was annihilated, Luco himself and five of his men being secured as prisoners, while all the others were slain.

After this many other arrests were made in different quarters, roads were opened up, education was attended to, and gradually such dreadful experiences as had been common in the fair Italian provinces became stories of the past.

D. B. MCKEAN.



THE COAST OF LE VENDÉE.

WE had been living for some time in one of the inland towns of France, on the banks of the Loire, and as the weather there was warm and heavy it was decided that I should be sent with a friend for a few weeks to the Sables d'Olonné, on the coast of Le Vendée. We arrived in the evening, and when, after being pent up so long in town, I breathed the free, fresh air coming in full from the ocean, I danced with delight. The beach at this place is long and wide, and when the tide is low the sand becomes hard and smooth, and extends far into the water. On one side there is a jetty with the lighthouse at the end, and on the other the banks run down to a point, beyond which lies the famous Isle of Ré, which they told me had been attacked by the English when they sent reinforcements to help the French Huguenots at La Rochelle.

To come back to my first impressions of this splendid beach, I remember the moon was shining across the water and sparkling on the waves as they rushed into the sands.

The next morning from our balcony, which looked on the sea, we beheld a lovely sight. The sun was bright in the heavens, and the water blue and dancing glittered in the light; hundreds of fishing-boats came round the point of the lighthouse, some with white gleaming sails, some with red ones, which contrasted harmoniously with the blue of the sea and sky, while others, nearer shore, showed on their grey expanse a large blue heart, an arrow, bird, or other device adding to the quaintness of the scene.

These boats go out very early in the morning, and come back laden with sardines, soles, and other fish. One of our great pleasures was to go down to the beach in the afternoon and watch them come in, sailing briskly up to the port, as if anxious to land their precious freight, or lazily flapping their sails in the summer breeze, according as the wind blew more or less from the right direction. Now and again we would see a big brig going out, bound for Spain, where numbers of tunny fish are to be found. When the brigs come back laden with these fish it is curious to see the activity of all around, the women with baskets full carrying them ashore, and the men getting them placed and packed. What became of them afterwards I never could find out, for we certainly never ate any of them.

Another pretty sight which we saw on our afternoon walk, was the wives of the fishermen mending the nets as they were spread out to dry along the jetty after the boats got in. These women are very picturesque with their short red petticoats, their white kerchiefs and caps, and their legs bare nearly to the knee, or else with pretty striped stockings and sabots, or wooden shoes, which click as they walk, making a musical sound if there are many of them together. These sabots they leave at the edge

of the nets and walk lightly across to the place to be mended, where they sit down on very low chairs, and their nimble fingers soon close up the holes.

These women are very clean, and their riches consist in their linen and the number of their red petticoats, of which they are very proud. On Sunday, when they go to church, many of them take their little chairs with them to sit on, and the effect, I assure you, is very funny.

You would be amused, too, to see all the wares of the market-people spread out on the ground around the door of the church—vegetables and flowers, fruits, coloured handkerchiefs, socks and stockings, utensils and spools of cotton, collars, ribbons, and all the different articles likely to attract the attention or satisfy the wants of the peasants.

On the feast of the Virgin, the 15th of August, you see the long procession come out of the church door, headed by the banners of our Lady, and composed of the priests and choristers, the little girls of the parish school dressed in white with baskets of flowers, which they scatter as they go, the boys with badges of blue ribbon, carrying banners, and followed by the whole congregation; they take their course through the streets and back again, making a most effective scene, while the chanting of the priest, joined by all in the procession, produces a solemn and yet cheerful impression.

I must not forget to tell of the donkeys, which are a great feature at the Sables; they have their stables on the beach all summer, except during the very high tides, and it is amusing to pay them a visit and to see the baby donkeys as they frisk about. Some of these little things are really pretty, and there was one all black, with ears almost as long as himself, and an intelligent face, which was a special favourite with us all. The beach being hard and smooth, it is great fun for a large party to mount the donkeys and gallop up and down on the sand; one of our friends used sometimes to head a cavalcade of twenty or thirty, and it was exciting to try and win the race on one of these long-eared coursers.

Besides, there were pretty little waggons, which we young folk could drive ourselves, and many a pleasant excursion did we make in that way.

One day we had a picnic at the ruins of Talmont, which are among the most ancient in the Vendée.

I cannot close without recalling the touching scenes I have witnessed among these poor people, for on many an evening when there had been rough weather, or a high wind, we could see the wives of the fishermen standing for hours watching with anxious eyes the return of the well-known boats. They wait patiently, only leaving their post to attend to some household duty or to see to their children's comfort, and then they return to stand through wind and storm until the return of the men. If you chance to be near them, you become deeply interested, and every boat that comes in sight you exclaim 'There it is, I am sure;' 'Non, non,' the poor woman would say, 'I know *his* sail, it is not that;' and they can tell from the first little speck afar off, when to our unpractised eyes all seemed alike.

FAITH.

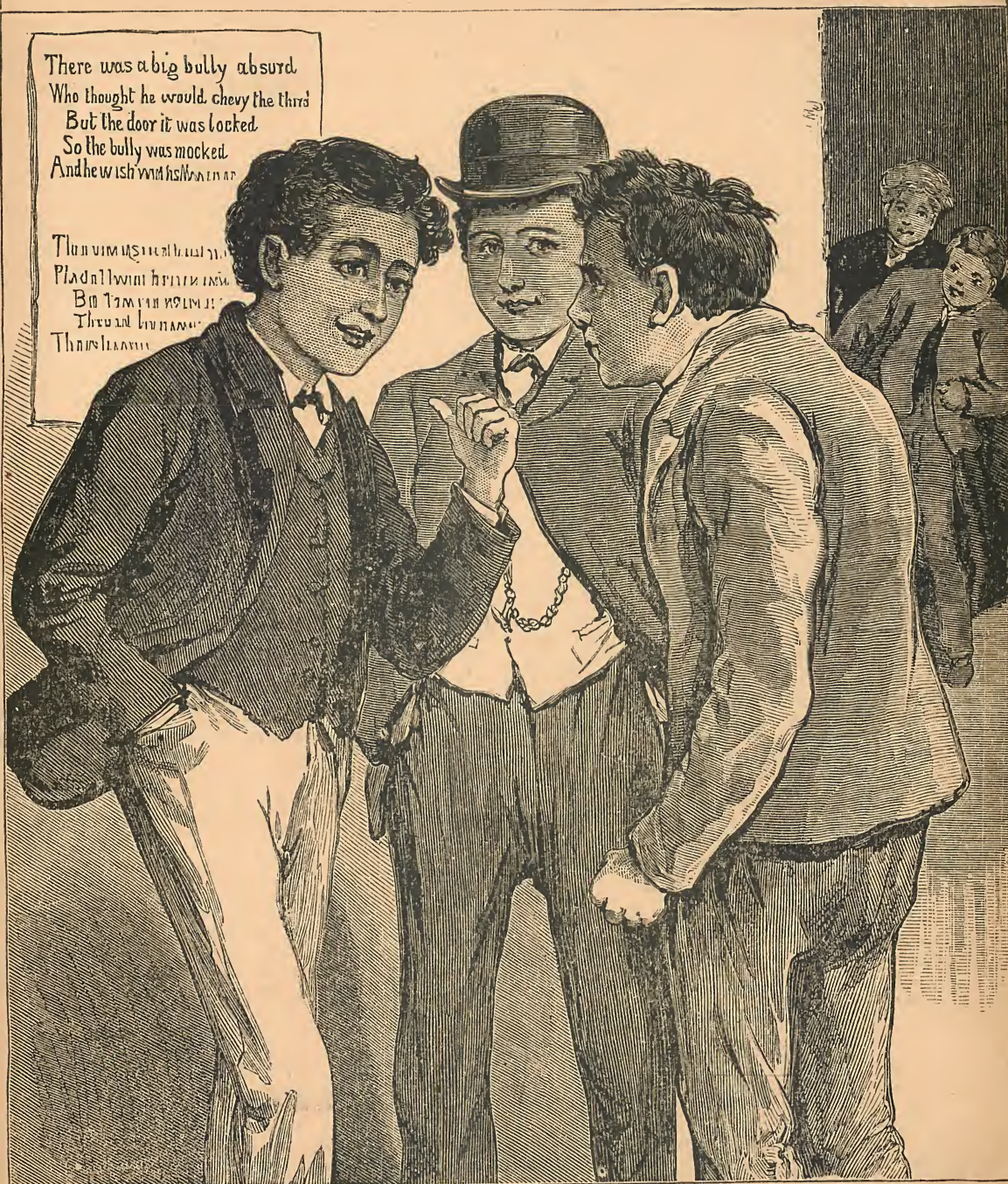




The Coast of Le Vendée.

There was a big bully absurd
 Who thought he would chey the third
 But the door it was locked
 So the bully was mocked
 And he wish with his hand

Then vims the third
 Plad all win the third
 But the door it was locked
 So the bully was mocked
 And he wish with his hand



Bruin vowing Vengeance.



THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 251.)

CLEAR up, old fellow,' said Baylis; 'it will come all right in a day or two.'

'Of course it will,' said Freckles; 'and we're all in the same box, too; so pick up.'

Tommie looked at them with some amazement. He had some papers in his hand, and was evidently just going to speak, when they began.

'What's up?' he asked, looking from one to another for some explanation of their conduct.

'Nothing fresh yet,' explained Baylis; 'but we thought we would just help you keep your pecker up, seeing how quiet and glum you have been all the afternoon.'

'Quiet and glum all the afternoon!' repeated Tommie, with a puzzled air. 'Oh, I see what it is now. But you keep your sympathy warm for a bit. It won't be long before I shall want it, if you have any to spare from yourself. But I'll just show you what I was so glum about, as you call it. See these papers?'

The company replied that they did.

'Well, I'm a bit of a writer you know, and I've just been composing a couple of poems on Bruin. I never tried poetry before, so it took me rather a long time. I dare say Tiger Thompson would have knocked them off in ten minutes. But they'll never guess I did it, that's one comfort. Here's the first:—

"There was a big bully absurd,
Who thought he would chevy the third.
But the door it was locked,
And the bully they mocked,
Till he wished it had never occurred."

Having read this offspring of his genius, young Tom looked around upon the group for that applause which was not denied so laudable an effort.

Green alone remained silent at first. It seemed to him short and insignificant.

'Is that all?' he asked.

'No,' said Tom, with a look of gratitude for once at their ally; 'here's another; only I feel a kind of modesty about this, because it describes a personal matter. I'll read it, and then you'll understand.

"There was a great bully, who maybe
Pinched Tommie because he's a gay bee.
But Tom ran a pen
Through his trousers, and then
The bully cried 'Oh!' like a baby."

'Well done, Tommie!' cried Baylis; and the others expressed equal approval.

Green rolled his large eyes in silence for a moment, and then uttered the doubtful compliment of 'Who would have thought it?'

'Now,' said Tommie, 'what shall we do with these?'

'Put them in the Red magazine,' said Freckles.

'Ah! it wouldn't be put in, because some of the sixth are Reds, and they wouldn't think it up to the mark.'

'Paste them up somewhere.'

'A good idea!' said the author. 'I think we will paste it up in the outside corridor. We may as well do it now, if nobody happens to be looking. I have some stamp edging that will fix it up safe enough; and if Bruin pulls it down soon, I have a copy, and we can stick it up again.'

Acting upon this advice, two or three of the group repaired to the corridor, and posted up the offensive matter with great glee. It soon attracted attention, and a friend quickly communicated the news to the person most interested. Bruin was promptly upon the scene, and at once removed the libellous document, vowing vengeance against its authors in the choicest terms to be found in his vocabulary.

Baylis and the crowd around the talented writer had looked on at the scene from a convenient post of vantage, and at once retired to their own corner of the playground, there to quake in anticipation of the further trouble likely to ensue from this additional note of defiance.

But the dark winter afternoon soon drove all the boys to the shelter of the school-house, where the ringleaders were in greater security. No prolonged ill-treatment could, they felt sure, be inflicted on any one of their number there without some sign of it reaching the master's ears. Their confidence was well-founded, for no attempt was made that evening, and all retired to bed in high feather. Green was in particularly good spirits, and showed a fearless disregard of the consequences likely to ensue from his bold language, quite remarkable in one who had so great a care for his own skin.

'I think we have done them this time,' he said, with an air of importance which could not fail to exasperate some of his hearers.

'How much did you do towards it, Green?' asked Choundy, who generally played the part of an observer merely.

'I? Why, haven't I been in it all through? Wasn't my bed used for barricade? Didn't I stand out in the playground there before them all? I should think I did have some hand in it! But they won't try to take us in again.'

However, all were too much occupied in thinking of the common foe to fall into quarrels amongst themselves, and Green's boasts passed unnoticed.

The following day being unusually fine and cold, the advice of the sagacious Tom to remain only in one part of the playground became intolerable. Even before morning school the band of rebels broke up, and scattered to one quarter and another in search of exercise.

During morning school Baylis remembered that Leslie had mentioned a pond as being in the school grounds—a pond not very deep, and not much frequented by skaters. He at once resolved to get out his skates, and ask the great man to tell him where this pond was. This he did, and was fortunate enough to find Leslie stumping across the playing-field. Walking up to him, skates in hand, he said,—

'I say, Leslie, don't you remember telling me there was a pond about here somewhere?'

Leslie stopped, and looked thoughtfully at the questioner for a minute.

'I don't remember saying anything about a pond.'

'Oh, yes, you did; you know, you said it wasn't deep, one could get out in a twinkling if it gave way, and there weren't many fellows who went on it.'

Light now seemed to break in upon the great man's mind.

'Oh, yes, of course. This way, and I'll show it to you now.'

He led the way into a part of the playground the new boy had never yet seen, and thence into the playing-field, where cricket and other games were carried on in their seasons. In one corner of this they presently came upon a small pond, usually choked with weeds, but now covered with rough ice. It might have been four or five yards in diameter, but not more.

'Here you are,' said Leslie; 'this is the pond I meant.'

'This? It's a regular swindle! Do you think ——'

'I don't think anything about it,' said Leslie. 'You didn't ask how big the pond was, and I didn't tell you.'

Several small boys, who had been engaged in an impromptu game of football, were witnesses of the scene, and their laughter excited the wrath of Baylis to a dangerous point.

He was about to reply in angry tones, when he noticed a group advancing into the field towards the pond. Nicholson and Grant were amongst them. Leslie, too, had seen their approach, and in an altered tone said to Baylis,—

'These fellows are after you, I expect. You had better cut and run.'

Retreat in the direction of the house was hopeless, for the enemy had command of the only road in that direction. He might perhaps dodge round them; but there seemed little hope of escape. However, he moved towards the centre of the ground, upon which the pursuers spread out like a fan. They were evidently bent on his capture.

Baylis was a fleet runner for his age, but he could not out-manceuvre four such enemies as those now in chase, and, after a sharp burst, he was safely captured by the dreaded Bruin.

CHAPTER V.

'Now we've got you, my young blood!' said Nicholson. 'You proposed the barring out with bedsteads, did you? All right; we'll give you a taste of something that will make you a little wiser another time.'

'Let me go,' said Norman, stoutly.

'All right, don't be in a hurry about it. Bring him along, Bruin.'

Grant and Carter dragged the captive across the field to the small pavilion, of which Nicholson, as a member of the Sports Committee, had a key. Here Baylis was promptly tied down to a box, and then belaboured with a couple of straps. Bruin, remembering the incident of the pen, to which such offensive allusion had been made in the poems, varied the entertainment by trying effects produced by pricking the victim in the arms and legs with a pin.

After some minutes spent in this way, during which not a sound could be got from the victim, Nicholson ordered the punishment to stop.

'Now,' he said, 'will you ever advise those young brats to bar us out again?'

'Yes,' was the reply; 'I'd do it fifty times.'

'Give him some more, Bruin,' was the order, only too promptly obeyed.

After more punishment another respite was called for.

'Will you promise now?'

'No,' was the answer.

'Then go it again, Bruin.'

Bruin began. But Leslie, who had been a silent spectator up to this point, seized his arm.

'Look here,' he said, flushed with indignation, 'you are carrying this beyond a joke. There isn't much fun in four great fellows licking a little chap like this. Let him go.'

'What are you talking about?' said Nicholson. 'I suppose we know as well what's for the good of the school as you do?'

'Never mind; let him go. If you don't, I'll undertake to let the Doctor know of it before the day's out.'

'You're a sneak,' said the valiant Bruin.

'If it wasn't for this crutch you should pay for that. But I'll take the risk of being called that. I'm not such a cur as to shirk a duty when it's plain.'

'Duty!' said Nicholson, with a sneer.

'Yes, duty. This bullying is a low trick no decent fellow ought to encourage, and I'll do what I can to put it down. Why don't you go in for licking fellows of your own size? The butcher's boy in the village brags that you, Bruin, ran away from him.'

'I wouldn't fight a cad.'

'No, you like bullying little boys better. I shall let this youngster go; he has had quite enough by this time.'

'Do as you please,' said Nicholson. 'I dare say we've taught him not to get up to those tricks again.'

'No, you haven't,' said the redoubtable Baylis.

'Ah, well! never mind. You had better think twice before trying them on again.' With this parting shot they retired.

(To be continued.)

AMALFI.

THIRTY miles south of Naples, in a crevice of the rocky coast of beautiful Southern Italy, stands the little village of Amalfi. Groups of fishing-boats anchored along the shore tell the fact that fishing is the main occupation of the inhabitants. The scattered and small white houses, peeping from their surrounding groves of lemon-trees, and casting long white reflections on the deep blue sea, tell also that these inhabitants are both humble and few in number. Beyond these modern buildings, along the overhanging rocks, are old battlemented walls and ruined towers, which speak of an earlier and more extensive Amalfi, and to hear of it in its glory one must shut one's eyes to the present century, and open them again in

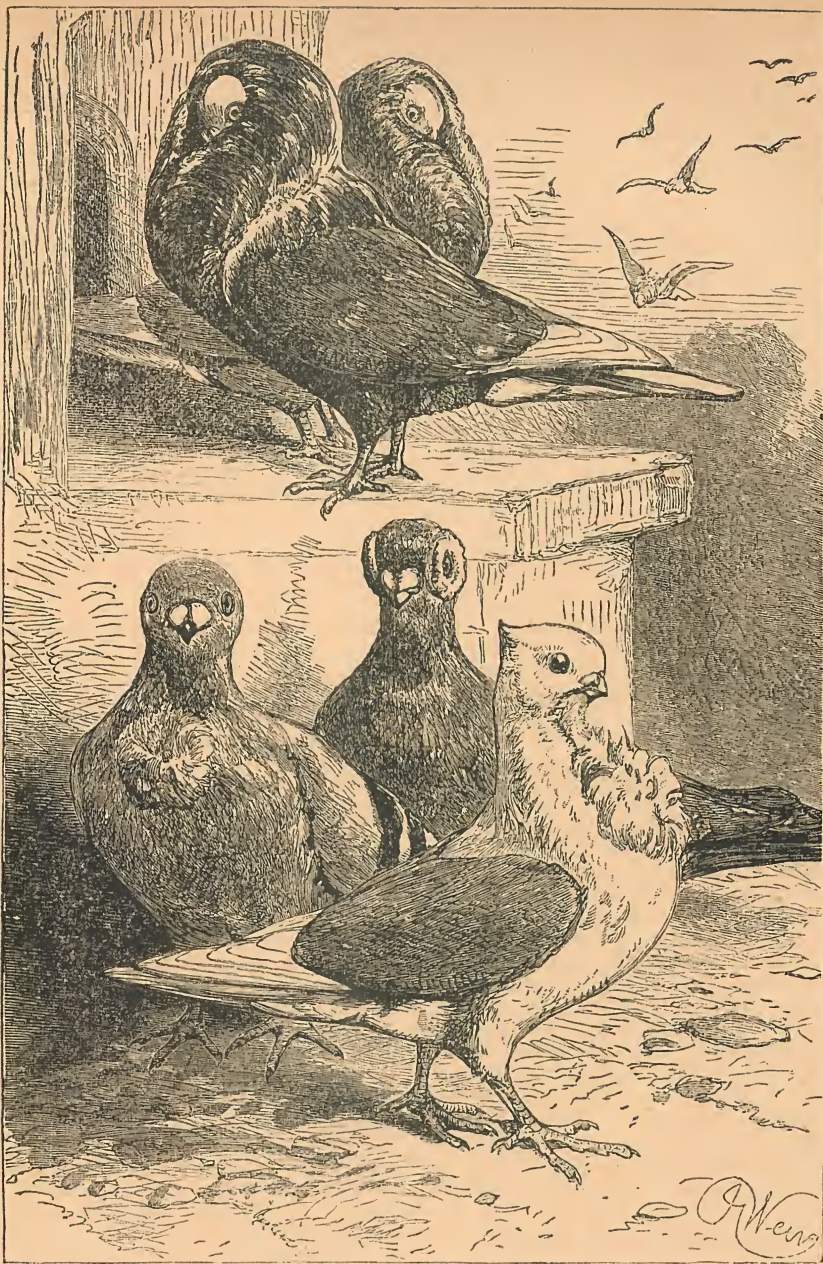


Amalfi.

imagination in the ninth. Then Amalfi was a large maritime republic of 50,000 inhabitants, at the head of Italian commerce and enterprise, and vying with her beautiful sister, Venice, in her intercourse with the East. 'What ships are from Amalfi?' was the question with which foreign quays resounded, while the gold and silver of its merchants and navigators found a ready market in all parts of the world. Nor were their riches and their enterprise the only things for which the merchants of Amalfi were celebrated. Of their goods they give to build churches and hospitals

in foreign lands, the most celebrated of which latter was that in Palestine, and sent forth a chosen band to join Godfrey and the Crusaders at the siege of Jerusalem.

Amalfi has still another boast, and one to which every modern seaman owes a debt of eternal gratitude. To Flavio Gioga, a citizen of its republic, is due the honour of the invention of the compass, and its introduction into navigation; and through him this pretty little fishing-village may be ranked as one of the greatest benefactors to mankind.



FANCY PIGEONS.

THERE are few prettier sights than a collection of fancy pigeons. Not the roses themselves can show a greater diversity of form and colour than can these charming little pets; and what is the most remarkable thing about both is, that they are each said to be descended from a common stock. It has been proved beyond question that all the varieties of fancy pigeon are but modifications of the common Blue Rock; and if left to themselves they soon exhibit a tendency to return to the original form,

with its simple plumage of black bars across the wings. The only feature possessed in common by all pigeons, however else they may differ from each other, is the colour of the legs, which, unless it may be in the feather-legged sorts, is always bright red.

Four sorts of pigeons—the Carriers, Pouters, Tumblers, and Barbs, are esteemed as 'high-class' birds. An example of the last is seen in the centre of the lower group in our picture. The Barbs, or Barbary Pigeons, came to us, as their name implies,

from North-western Africa, and have long been kept as ornamental birds in this country.

The pair of birds at the top of the picture, with their heads muffled up in what look like enormous boas, are Jacobins. Old John Moore, the earliest writer upon fancy pigeons, describes the birds thus:—‘The Jacobine, or, as it is vulgarly called for shortness, the *Jack*, is, if true, the smallest of all pigeons, and the smaller still the better. It has a range of feathers inverted quite over the hinder part of the head, and reaching down on each side of the neck to the shoulders of the wings, which form a kind of fryers’ hood; from hence this pigeon has its name Jacobine, because the fathers of that Order all wear hoods to cover their bald crowns; hence the upper part of this range of feathers is called the hood, and the more compact these feathers are, and the closer to the head, so much more is the bird esteemed.’ The close-lying hood in which the head lies buried, like that of the Elizabethan lady in its ruffles, should meet in front. But some ill-bred birds are perverse enough to wear their shirts open in front, displaying the bare skin.

The Owl—the one on the left of the group of three in the lower part of the picture—derives its name from some supposed likeness to the bird of wisdom, and comes to us from the East, having been brought to its present state of perfection by the Mahomedan fanciers. This neat little creature should have a very short, down-turned beak, and a nicely rounded head; but its specialty is its *gullet*, or dewlap, a membrane reaching from the lower mandible to the frill.

The Turbit is a near relation of the owl, but may be distinguished from it at once by its conceited little crest, as well as by its colour, the whole bird being generally a pure white with the exception of the covert feathers of the wings, which assume almost any pigeon colour. It is also distinguished above all other white-necked birds by its lustrous neck, which glances and plays in the sunshine like the finest white satin. Like the owl it has a deep dewlap, an unenviable possession to the owner, as it seems to flourish at the expense of the real gullet or throat; so that when fully developed the mother-bird finds it so difficult to disgorge her food for her young ones, after the manner of the tribe, that she soon gives up the attempt and the little ones perish. In fact, fanciers generally find that the higher the class of these birds, the greater is their dislike to nurse their young—a peculiarity not wholly confined, we believe, to high-born pigeons.

A STRANGE SALUTATION.

IT is said that the Indians in the neighbourhood of a certain North-west American Fort used as a salutation the word ‘Clakhohayah.’ Its origin for a long time puzzled inquirers, until at last they found out that the Indians were often present when a hunter named Clark arrived at the Fort. Hearing him always saluted with the words, ‘Clark, how are you?’ they deemed this to be the proper English form of greeting. When, therefore, one Indian met another, each, with the utmost solemnity, uttered the word ‘Clakhohayah.’

A. R. B.

WHAT CAME OF AN IDLE HOUR.

CHAPTER I.



SHALL be back again in an hour; and remember, boys, if your Latin is not thoroughly known you will have no drive this afternoon,’ said a father to his two sons. And they knew from experience that his warning would be carried out, unless their lesson was quite perfect.

The task which their father had given them was the conjugation of two verbs—not a very hard lesson for two such boys. Harry, the younger of the two, set to work at once; and Fred, his brother, did the same, only his industry did not last, for his book was soon pushed aside, and with arms sprawling on the table, he began to meditate (rather prematurely) upon the pleasure in store for him that afternoon, for there was no greater treat to Fred than a drive with his father.

Time when in day-dreaming flies away very quickly; and so it appeared to have done to Fred, when roused from his reverie by his brother exclaiming,—

‘Half an hour gone! Do you nearly know your verbs, Fred?’

‘Not begun them yet,’ replied the other, carelessly. ‘But I shan’t take half an hour over this.’

‘Oh, won’t you?’ said Harry. ‘Why, I’ve been that time and don’t know one yet.’

‘Yes, but you are a regular slow-coach!’ rudely answered Fred.

‘Well,’ said Harry, ‘better be slow and sure, like the tortoise, than like the hare we were reading about in the fable. But,’ he added, ‘do begin, or you’ll never know your lesson by twelve.’

‘I’m going to begin, if you’ll be quiet,’ said Fred; and taking up his book he began to study in earnest.

‘I’ve nearly learnt one verb, Harry,’ he said soon after, and as he said so he thrust his hands into his trousers’ pockets.

What an unlucky thrust that was! for in so doing he discovered some ‘bulls’ eyes,’ which until now had escaped his memory.

‘Well, this won’t take up any time,’ thought he, as he deposited one of the sweets in his mouth; but indeed he was much mistaken, and he found that the sweets had had more of his attention than the Latin, when Harry called out presently,—

‘We have only five minutes more.’

‘Only five minutes?’ exclaimed Fred, in astonishment. ‘I say, I must be quick!’

And quick, indeed, he was; but to no avail, for his lesson was not nearly learnt when the clock struck twelve.

‘Oh, dear! It can’t be twelve, surely?’ said Fred.

But yes, indeed, it was; and what was more, a few minutes after in walked their father to hear the lesson. Harry said his lesson first; but as he knew it perfectly he was not long in saying it, and in what seemed to Fred an incredibly short time his father said, ‘Very well learnt. Now, Fred, come and say yours.’

But with this request Fred could not comply; for, after getting through half a verb he could say no more, but stood stuttering and stammering, and knowing about as much of the rest as the old tabby cat that was dozing on the rug.

'This must be learnt this afternoon,' said his father, as he closed the book and left the room. And Fred knew to his sorrow that there was no chance of a drive for him that day.

CHAPTER II.

FRED was dreadfully disappointed when he saw his father and brother get into the dog-cart and drive off, but he knew he had only himself to blame for being deprived of such a pleasure. However, I am afraid he was not sorry for the fault of idleness but only for its consequences; for, instead of making up for lost time by being industrious now, he began to complain of having to learn lessons at all.

'What a bother these lessons are!' said he; 'and especially having to stick indoors to learn them! If I could take my books in the garden I should not mind.'

But this he knew he must not do, for his father had forbidden any book being taken from the school-room.

'I know what I'll do,' said he. 'I can copy out my lesson, and then learn it in the garden without taking the book.'

And so, tearing a leaf from a copy-book, he scribbled away as fast as he could; but he soon got tired of writing, so laying down his pen he said,—

'I'll come back for more when I know this bit.'

Certainly 'this bit' was a very little bit, and would not have taken even a dunce two minutes to learn. So, having settled affairs to his satisfaction, he scampered out into the garden, and climbing up his favourite oak-tree he was soon comfortably seated in one of the lower, low branches.

'Ah!' thought he, 'if I could always bring my lessons up here, I should learn them ever so fast.'

But certainly he was not getting on 'ever so fast' that afternoon, nor had his eyes once rested upon the scrap of paper before him, for his attention had been taken up in looking at a merry little tomtit that was busily darting about the tree in search of insects. No, no, Master Fred; the oak-tree may be very comfortable, but it is certainly not a good place for work. Presently Fred forgot all about the Latin and the tomtit, too, for the heat had made him so sleepy that he had fallen into a doze, and was dreaming that his father had returned for him to have a drive; but his dream soon came to an abrupt and unpleasant termination, and he awoke, fancying he had fallen out of the carriage.

Certainly it did seem like it, for there he was sprawling on the ground, and feeling very bruised and shaken. He quite expected his father to come and ask if he were hurt; and not until he caught sight of the oak-tree did the facts of the case dawn upon his confused memory. He had just convinced himself that he had not been for a drive at all, when he was startled by a well-known voice saying,—

'What are you doing there, Master Fred?'

And looking up, he saw the laughing face of Jim Wills, the boy who had the care of the fowls and pigs.

CHAPTER III.

JIM was one of those boys who was constantly doing something he ought not to do. So, when Fred saw his mischievous face, he felt sure that he had caused his downfall. So he said angrily to him,—

'Did you pull me off?'

'Did I pull you off?' repeated Jim, in well-feigned astonishment. 'What do you mean, Master Fred?'

'Did you dare to pull me off the tree?' asked Fred, more angrily than before.

'No, indeed! I daren't: besides, you know you'd ha' seen me do it,' answered the rogue, who had (finding Fred asleep) pulled his leg and caused him to lose his balance. 'I hope,' he added in pretended concern, 'you're not much hurt, anyhow?'

'I'm not hurt at all,' said Fred, forgetting in his wrath the bruises he had felt before, for, in spite of Jim's denial, Fred was sure that he was the culprit; but as he had been asleep at the time of his downfall he thought it best to say no more about it, but looking as dignified as possible under such circumstances, and doing his utmost not to limp, he walked towards the house.

'If you're sure you're not hurt,' called out Jim, 'I've got something to show you.'

'What?' asked Fred, stopping to hear the answer.

'Would you like me to show you a nest with five young goldfinches in it?' said Jim.

'Oh, yes, I should!' replied the other, eagerly.

'Where did you find it?'

'Come, and I'll show you,' answered Jim, as he led the way, closely followed by Fred. At the end of the garden was a low wooden fence, and over this Jim was just preparing to vault, when Fred said in surprise,—

'You are never going into Uncle Robert's garden?'

'Yes I am: what's the harm?' said Jim.

'Why, you know we must not go,' said the other.

'Well, then, you can't see the nest, that's certain, for it's there,' said Jim, pointing, 'in that cherry-tree yonder. We can't do no harm in going straight to the nest and back again: it isn't like as if we went after the fruit.'

'Still, we have no business to go,' said Fred, beginning to waver.

'Well then, don't, if you're afraid,' said his evil companion, at the same time jumping over the fence which divided the gardens; and Fred, in his desire to see the nest, yielded to the temptation and followed the example.

It was a most fortunate thing for the goldfinches that they had taken it into their little heads that morning to leave the nest and fly away, or they would all have been made prisoners.

Jim was soon up the cherry-tree, but it was some time before he got the nest, for it was built at the end of a very slender branch, and Jim had great difficulty in reaching it. However, at last he had it securely, and placing his hand over it to prevent (as he thought) the young birds from escaping, he just peeped in to see all was safe? What was his disgust when he found that he was holding so carefully nothing but a deserted nest!

(Concluded in our next.)



"What are you doing there, Master Fred?"



"Give him cold pig some morning."

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 259.)

HIS victory of Leslie over superior forces was due to several facts. In the first place, the offenders were quite aware that he had enough moral courage to inform against them if he thought it right. Secondly, they knew quite well that several of the sixth besides Leslie were opposed to anything like bullying. And lastly, he had the advantage of them in general influence. His tongue could inflict wounds more enduring than those of their hands, and he was quite capable of making things very disagreeable for them if he chose. Hence their speedy agreement to his demands.

Leslie released Norman from his bonds, gave him a word or two of encouragement, and then said, 'You had better be off towards the house, whilst I lock this place up.'

Having thanked his rescuer, Norman went off, rather dolefully it must be confessed, for his back was sore, and his spirit wounded. As he turned over the circumstances in his mind, he remembered that Nicholson had said he had been the proposer of the barricade scheme. How did he know that?

'Somebody must have split on us, that's it. I only wish I knew who it was. They should smart for it.'

In this mood he passed through the playground on his way towards the house. Before long he met Green, who was strolling about in an aimless way, and not taking that care of his precious person which the dangers round made necessary. He accosted Baylis with an air of sympathy.

'I say, you look down in the mouth.'

'So would you if you had been in my place.'

'What's been the row, then?'

'Oh, nothing, only those beggars, Nicholson, Grant, and Carter, got hold of me. I wish I knew who had been splitting on me; I would teach him better jolly soon.'

'What have they done, then?'

'Why, some young sneak told those fellows that I put the rest up to the barricading dodge. So I did, and I would do it again; but I don't think fellows ought to split on each other. But I'll find him out.'

'I tell you what,' said Green, with an air of great mystery, 'I believe it was that new fellow who came up with you; isn't Battersley his name?'

'What, Battersley? I don't believe he would do it.'

'Well, I saw him talking to Nicholson, any way.'

'I don't believe it. But here's Tosstop; I'll ask him.'

Young Tom on being applied to said Battersley certainly had been seen to go behind the Fives' Courts with Nicholson soon after morning school was over. But nobody knew what took place there. Most of

the fellows had gone off skating or sliding on the meadows, and only a few were in the playground at the time.

'Do you think he did it?' asked Norman.

'I don't know,' said Tom. 'Nicholson and those fellows may have walked into him until he confessed. But anyhow, it was a mean trick.'

'So it was; and we had agreed to be chums.'

'Has he ever done anything like it before?' asked Tom.

'I don't know. I never saw him in my life until we were coming here in the same train.'

Tom whistled in an expressive manner, indicating thereby his own belief that this put another aspect on the question. Green, too, had something more to say.

'Don't you remember that when the barring out was proposed Battersley said it wasn't much good, because they would only make it worse for us afterwards?'

'So he did,' said Tom; 'so he did.'

'What must we do?' asked Norman.

'Give him the cold shoulder,' said Tommie. 'He'll guess what it's for soon enough.'

The plan thus suggested commended itself to the judgment of Freckles and one or two others to whom it was submitted, and ample opportunities were speedily found for putting it into execution. Battersley was not seen by them until they were filing in to dinner. He looked flushed and excited, and was evidently conscious of something unusual having taken place. He found on coming to the table that, contrary to their custom on previous days, there was no room left for him between Freckles and Baylis. On trying to sit down next to the former, he was surprised to see him drag another lad into the place. He at once sat down on the chair left empty, wondering much at this.

'I say, Norman,' he began.

'Tommie,' said Norman, before he could get any further, 'how long is the skating going to last?'

'Norman,' began Battersley again.

'Because I'm afraid it will break up soon,' continued the person he addressed.

Finding that no attention was paid to these and other efforts to obtain a hearing, he bent his attention on the dinner alone. He was privileged, however, to hear Green holding forth on the character and just punishment of sneaks with great fluency and earnestness.

After dinner he made up his mind to seek out Baylis, and ask some explanation of their changed attitude. But whenever he neared a group where Baylis was, they at once moved off at his approach.

It was not until afternoon school was over that the wished-for opportunity came. They met in the corridor, and Battersley, planting himself directly in the other's path, said, 'Baylis, what's the matter? Why are you keeping out of my way?'

'You know well enough. Get out of my path, or I'll make you.'

'I'll get out at once, if you will tell me what this is all about.'

'And I tell you you know well enough, or ought to; and with this he brushed roughly past his questioner, who stood looking after him in amazement.'

Sending to Coventry is a method of punishment which affects some persons more than others. Herbert Battersley felt most keenly the fact of being cut off from his usual companions, and that before he had made many acquaintances in the school. But his accusers were surprised to find him less troubled by their conduct than they had expected. His air was rather that of an injured man than of a criminal undergoing the just punishment of his misdeeds. Being thrown entirely on his own resources, he gave unusual attention to his work, and made rapid progress in the class, whilst in the recreation hours he devoured book after book from the school library. As to the mysterious league against him, he seemed resolved, if possible, to live it down, since nobody made any attempt to openly ventilate the question. As for Baylis, he was fast forgetting the old compact between them, in the delight of skating every day on the flooded meadows. There he distinguished himself in a way that drew out the admiration of the smaller boys, and excited some envy amongst a few of the elders.

In the meantime Bruin Grant had been turning over in his mind the best way of revenging himself upon the author of the two epigrams previously quoted. Their popularity had been great, and the offensive matter was being constantly brought under his notice. Some daring youngster had succeeded one night in pinning to his pillow a copy of these choice effusions. On another occasion he found them reposing between the leaves of his dictionary. More than once he had observed groups of small boys grinning from ear to ear whilst one of their number recited something he knew too well. More than once, too, he had been the unwilling witness of a little drama, in which was represented in dumb show the pinch-and-pen incident between little Tosstop and himself, and the young rascals had always chosen some time and place at which it was impossible for him to do more than threaten from a distance. These incidents, of course, much inflamed his desire to repay the talented young author, whose name he had not failed to ask from the same traitor who bore witness against Baylis. For several days he racked his brains for some scheme which might promise the gratification of his miserable wish, but without success.

Whilst thinking over the subject one day in a rather gloomy mood, Nicholson sauntered into the room, and sat down by his ally.

'What's the news, Bruin?' he asked.

'Nothing; I wish there was. I've been trying for this week past to think of some way of making it up to that young beggar Tosstop.'

'Ah! the author of those striking verses, eh?'

'That's the young beggar. I can't lay my hands on him outside, he's too cunning by half. I wish I could think of some trick that would make me square with him, and I wouldn't mind.'

'Give him cold pig some morning.'

'Oh, yes, and have the whole roomful down on me! That wouldn't do.'

'Sew up his clothes some night.'

'Ah! that isn't bad. But couldn't a fellow bag them altogether, and stick them out of sight somewhere?'

'Yes, if you can get into the room and out safely.'

'I'll try it, any way, and to-night, too.' And with this understanding they dropped the subject.

Now it so happened that Battersley neared the door of the room beside which they were sitting just as the middle of this important conversation was reached. Distinguishing Bruin Grant's voice, he at once stopped, and, without any intention of playing the eavesdropper, he heard Bruin accept this new scheme for annoying Tosstop. He turned and went off towards the playground again at once.

That evening, on going to his desk for books to prepare the next day's lessons, Tom found a scrap of paper lying upon it addressed to himself. On opening it he found printed in ill-formed characters these words:—

'Bruin Grant will be in your room to-night, and will try to bag your clothes and hide them. Look out for him.'

That was all. The warning was unsigned, and printed letters had evidently been imitated in order to prevent the author's handwriting being recognised.

The sagacious young poet viewed this missive with some doubt. What did it mean? Was it a genuine warning from a friend, or was it some snare? He did not himself feel able to decide, but remembering that "two heads are better than one," he lost no time in laying the paper before the lads who had most thoroughly backed up his spirited foreign policy, namely, Baylis and Freckles. Green, too, seeing that something of importance was in question, added himself to the party.

When all had examined the document almost in silence, Tom asked for their opinions.

'It's genuine,' said Freckles, with a sagacious nod of his fiery head.

'I don't see why anybody should send it unless it was,' said Baylis.

'I don't know,' said the more suspicious Green; 'it's my belief that it's all a sell, that somebody wants to take you in. But they wouldn't take me in if they sent such a thing to me, though my name is Green.'

There was a laugh at the last speaker's expense, but everybody felt there was sense in what he said this time.

'The next thing is this,' pursued Tom; 'if it is genuine, who sent it?'

'That's what I can't make out,' said Freckles.

Baylis agreed that it was 'a poser,' and Green crowned all by pronouncing this question 'a regular snorter, and no mistake.'

At another time this choice expression would have called forth some inquiry as to its meaning and origin, but the subject in hand was now too mysterious and engrossing to admit of any such digression.

After some guesses at the authorship, which were at once scouted by the others—although of course each seemed possible to those who made it—Tom was seized with an idea.

'I've got it! I know who it was!'

'Who?' cried the rest.

'Why, Leslie, to be sure! Of course, he would know what Bruin was up to, and thinks he may as well put us on our guard. If he made them let you



The Mischievous Boy.

off, Baylis, he's just the fellow to try and sicken Bruin of his tricks by disappointing him.'

Of course Leslie was the man! How was it they had not thought of him before? It was as clear as daylight that he intended becoming a defender of the small boys against Bruin and his set. Such were their conclusions, based, you will see, upon some reasonable grounds.

'Don't you think you ought to send a note to Leslie, thanking him for the kind warning?' suggested Freckles.

'I don't think I ought,' said the other; 'he might not like notice taken of it.' And it was agreed not to do so.

The thoughts suggested by this note were so very many and attractive, that the four who were in the secret had great difficulty in thinking of such things as exercises and lessons. It was, in fact, a release to them when supper and bedtime came.

(To be continued.)

THE MISCHIEVOUS BOY.

THE mischievous boy is simply a locomotive off the track. Employment which is pleasant and profitable will keep him straight, and afford an outlet for his superfluous energies. Some boys are so full of life and enthusiasm that it seems almost impossible to find employment for them. They need physical exercise in addition to mental work. You may find out who these boys are in a school by watching their actions. They never sit long at a time. Such restless dispositions must be made a special study. Many times, if such a boy is asked to fetch a pitcher of water, or an armful of wood, he will be diverted from the mischief he was meditating. Employment is the safety-valve which must sometimes be opened.



"If God permit I may even eat of the fruit of these very trees."

HOPE.

A Tale from the Hebrew.

AS the Emperor Hadrian was passing near Tiberias, in Galilee, he saw an aged Jew digging a large trench, in order to plant some fig-trees. Surprised to see so old a man engaged in such labour, the Emperor said to him, 'Hadst thou properly employed the morning of thy life, thou needest not have worked so hard in the evening of thy days.'

'I have well employed my early days,' replied the

man; 'nor will I neglect the evening of my life; and let God do what He thinks best.'

'How old mayest thou be, good man?' asked the Emperor.

'A hundred years,' replied the man.

'What!' exclaimed Hadrian; 'a hundred years old art thou, and still plantest trees? Canst thou then hope ever to enjoy the fruit of thy labour?'

'Great King!' rejoined the hoary-headed man; 'yes, I do so hope. If God permit, I may even eat of the fruit of these very trees: if not, my children

will. Have not my forefathers planted trees for me, and shall I not do the same for my children?'

The Emperor, pleased with the honest man's reply, said, 'Well, good old man, if ever thou livest to see the fruit of these trees, let me know it;' and with these words he left him.

The old man did live to see the fruit of his labour, for the trees grew and flourished, and bore good fruit. As soon as they were sufficiently ripe he gathered some of the choicest figs, and putting them in a basket he went towards the residence of the Emperor. Now Hadrian happened to look out of the window of his palace, and seeing a man bent with age, and with a basket on his shoulders, standing near the gate, he ordered him to be admitted into his presence.

'What is thy pleasure, old man?' demanded Hadrian.

'May it please your majesty,' replied the man, 'to recollect seeing once a very old man planting some trees, when you desired him, if ever he should gather the fruit, to let you know. I am that old man, and this is the fruit of those very trees. May it please you graciously to accept them, as a humble token of gratitude for your majesty's great condescension.'

Hadrian was gratified to see so extraordinary an instance of old age, accompanied by the full use of manly faculties and honest exertion, and desiring the old man to be seated, and ordering the basket to be emptied of the fruit and filled with gold, he gave it to him as a present.

A BOY'S ENCOUNTER WITH WOLVES.

CANADIAN wolves are neither so large nor so ferocious as the European animal: few persons need fear them, unless during a very severe winter, when they associate in packs, and become really dangerous. On one occasion during a rather cold winter, a boy thirteen years of age was sent by his father to fetch home a pair of shoes. The distance was not more than a mile, by a foot-path through the woods, and the boy being well acquainted with the road felt no fear. Unfortunately, however, he was detained at the shoemaker's till nearly dark, when he started for home. As the darkness increased snow began to fall; the lad wandered from the pathway, and, becoming confused and alarmed, he could not recover it again. To add to his terror, he heard a sound like pattering on the fallen leaves of the forest: it was the tread of many wolves, who had scented their prey and were in full pursuit! Presently a fearful howling was heard, which almost paralyzed the poor fellow with fear; but he was a backwoods boy, and did not intend to be devoured by wolves if he could help it. Straining his eyes, in order to discover some means of escape, his heart bounded with joy at the sight of a tree, which, being branched somewhat lower than the others, he thought he would be able to climb. Making a great spring, he reached, and hung on by the lowest branch; and had just reached a fork in the tree which promised safety, when the whole pack, about twenty in number, surrounded him, leaping and howling so that he almost

lost his balance from sheer fright. And now began a terrible vigil. The wolves by leaping could almost reach him, while the poor lad could not climb any higher owing to the condition of the branches above: the night was intensely cold, and his hands so benumbed that he could scarcely retain his grasp of the branch against which he leaned. Fearing lest he might grow giddy and fall, he took off his woollen comforter, and bound himself firmly to the branch, when all of a sudden the howling mob below pricked up their ears, and were silent for a moment. Then one or two darted away, and were followed by the others. They had scented a deer, which had crossed the road at some distance, and for the present the little backwoods boy was delivered from his enemies. But he dared not come down, even though the ferocious creatures did not return; the snow lay deep upon the path, and he scarcely knew in which part of the forest he was. The faint dawn of a winter's day found him still sitting there looking out, oh, how anxiously, for help and succour from home! Nor did he wait in vain. As soon as there was enough light a search party had set out and the wood was soon resounding with the voices of those who scarcely expected to find any trace of the lad. But Donald was found; and when his father, almost in tears, pressed him to his heart, the boy's first words were, 'But, oh, father, I'm so sorry I've lost your shoes!' D. B. McKEAN.

WHAT CAME OF AN IDLE HOUR.

(Concluded from page 263.)



'HY, they are all gone!' he exclaimed: 'all five of them! What a bother! I thought they'd never have flown for another couple of days. Well, that's all that's left of the goldfinches.' And he threw down the empty nest in great disgust.

Fred picked up the nest and stood several minutes admiring the wonderfully pretty little structure; but at length remembering he was on forbidden ground, he called to Jim to 'make haste down.'

But Jim did not make haste; and it was not until he had received a second reminder that he began to descend: when he did so, Fred was horrified to see his cap filled with cherries.

'What a shame,' he exclaimed, 'to steal Uncle Robert's cherries!'

'I don't think it much of a steal to take a few cherries,' replied Jim.

'But you had no right to touch one: and you shan't eat one, either,' said Fred, catching hold of the other's cap.

'Perhaps you want them all yourself,' sullenly said Jim, as he jerked his cap out of Fred's grasp. 'But look here!' he added; 'what's the good of making a fuss about nothing, or next to it?'

'If you do eat them, I'll tell Uncle Robert!' said Fred.

'And if I don't what am I to do with them, I'd like to know? Leave them under the tree, I suppose? Come,' said Jim, 'now they are picked, you might as well have some, for I can't stick them on the tree again.'

Nor did he seem anxious to do so, for he was eating them as fast as he could.

Fred still said 'No,' but glanced with longing eyes at the fruit.

'Well,' said Jim, 'if it's your uncle you're thinking of, it can't matter to him if you or me has them.'

'That is quite true,' said Fred to himself; 'for uncle won't lose any more if I have some or not.'

However, in spite of Jim's argument, Fred knew that he would be as wrong as Jim if he shared in the plunder.

'Better have some before they are gone, said Jim, who was steadily eating away, and as he said so he held a large cherry just over Fred's parched lips.

The temptation was very great, and Fred made no effort to resist it, but seizing the cherry, he said,—

'Yes, I must have one, for I'm really dreadfully thirsty.'

But one cherry could not quench his thirst, so it was followed by another, and another, and another, until they were all gone. And alas! alas! when Jim talked of going for more, Fred did not try to stop him.

However, a second raid upon the cherries was not made, for the boys heard footsteps approaching, so they beat a hasty retreat into their own garden.

CHAPTER IV.

THEY had only had just time to jump over the fence when Fred heard his brother calling,—

'Fred! Fred! where are you?' And presently Harry came up, quite breathless with running. 'I've been looking everywhere for you! Where have you been?' said he, panting.

'Looking at the pigs,' said Jim, with a ready lie.

'Oh, I never thought of looking there! Fred,' he said, turning to his brother, 'such fun to-morrow! It's Uncle Robert's birthday, and we are to spend the afternoon with him and have rides on his pony! Won't it be fun?'

Not such fun for Fred to be his uncle's guest after robbing him. So he thought, as he silently followed Harry into the house.

It was not until they reached the hall that Fred remembered (to his dismay) he had done nothing towards learning his Latin; and there was no time to do so now, for tea was on the table. So the consequence was, after tea, when his father asked him to say his Latin, not a word more was known than had been in the morning; indeed not so much, for he had forgotten the little he knew then.

His father was very grieved at Fred's idleness, and spoke very seriously of the consequences of growing up an idle, ignorant boy. Just as he finished speaking, and Fred was beginning to feel sorry for his conduct, a knock came at the door, and who should walk in but Uncle Robert!

'Oh, he's come about his cherries!' thought Fred, turning pale with fright. But no! he had come upon quite a different errand, for it was to tell his nephews

that he would take them a row on the river the next day.

'I cannot allow Fred to come at all,' said his father. And then he explained why he could not.

Uncle Robert was, of course, very sorry to hear of his nephew's idleness; but he pleaded so hard for him to come, that at last his father agreed that Fred should go to his uncle's if he said his Latin perfectly first.

'You may leave the schoolroom now, for it is too late for you to learn your lesson to-night,' said his father.

And Fred was only too glad to take his departure, for he felt very uneasy while in his kind uncle's presence. He went straight up to bed; but the thought of his theft made him so unhappy that he could not get to sleep.

'I really am very sorry!' sobbed poor Fred. 'But what can I do?'

'Tell your uncle,' said his conscience.

'It would be dreadful to let Uncle Robert know I'd been stealing,' said he, feeling inclined to banish the good thought.

But his conscience still persisted in, 'Tell your uncle.' And at last she prevailed, and Fred made up his mind to see his uncle before breakfast the next day: and feeling much happier after this he soon fell asleep.

It was very early next morning when he awoke, but he got up at once, and dressing as quietly as he could, so as not to disturb Harry, he crept quietly downstairs into the schoolroom, and putting his Latin book before him, it was not long before he knew his lesson thoroughly.

'Now I don't mind when father hears it,' he said, with a sigh of relief, as he put his book away and started off on his unpleasant errand to his uncle.

He was soon at the house, and as the hall-door was open he walked straight to the library (where he knew he would find his uncle) and knocked gently at the door.

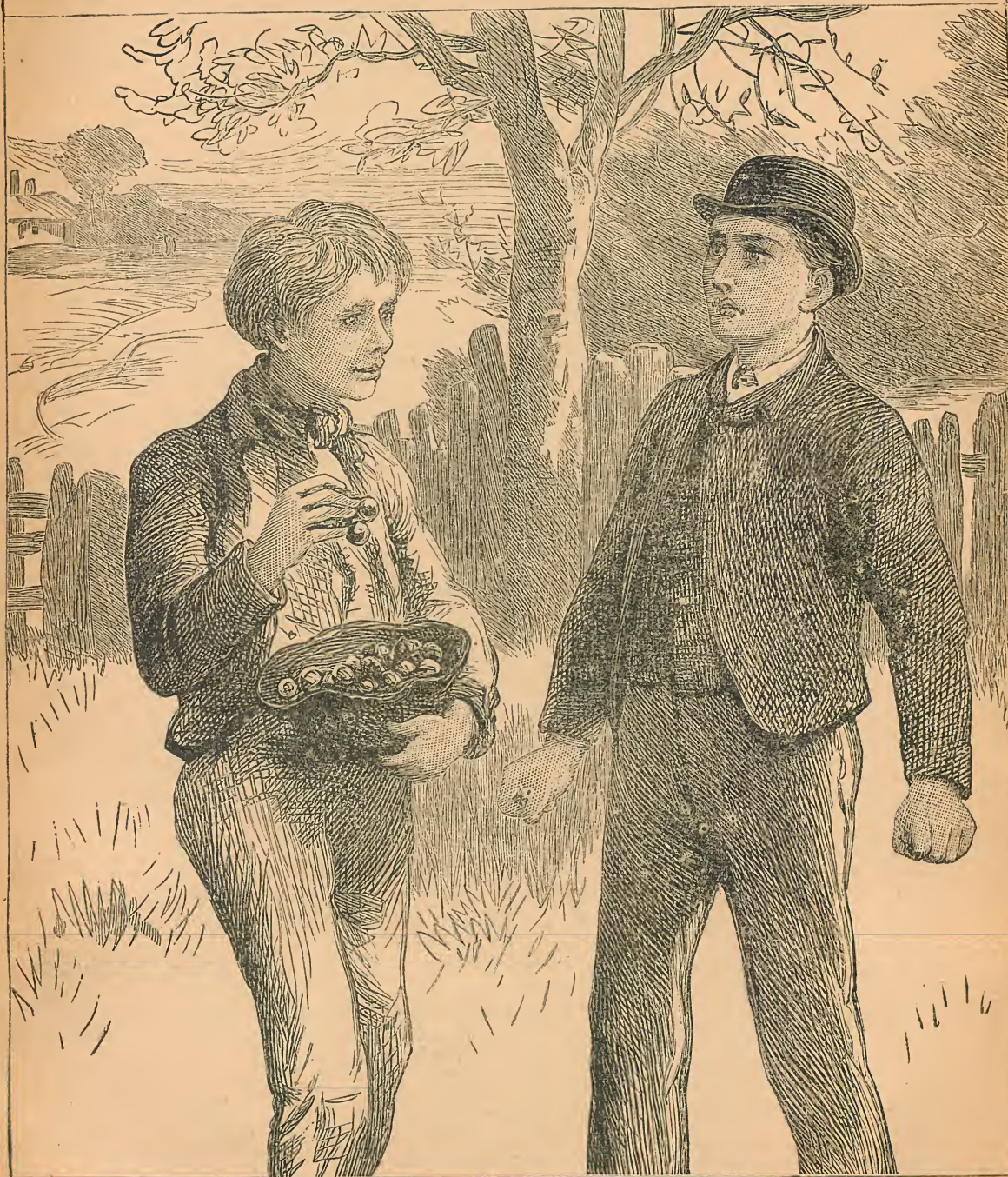
His courage was fast oozing away, and he felt a great inclination to run home again. However, he was ashamed to be so cowardly, so he waited until his uncle said, 'Come in;' then in he came, and told his uncle all that had occurred on the previous day; and he ended his confession by saying how sorry he was.

'Yes, I feel sure you are sorry,' said Uncle Robert, kindly: 'and I am pleased you have had courage to come and tell me, though I did know of the theft from my gardener, who has just been telling me he saw you and Jim eating the cherries. Ah, Fred!' he continued, laying his hand on his nephew's shoulder, 'what trouble your laziness led you into yesterday! Idleness is, indeed, the root of much evil: remember this, and you will have learnt a lesson more important than your Latin.'

'Yes, indeed, I will,' said Fred, feeling quite a load off his mind: and he kept his resolution, and day by day he bravely struggled to overcome the fault; and he grew up to be an industrious and useful man.

L. W.





"What a shame to steal Uncle Robert's cherries!"



"With an unearthly yell he dashed from the room."

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 268.)

CHAPTER VI.



NICE upstairs on that eventful night and the three conspirators, Baylis, Tom, and Freckles, went to bed with extraordinary rapidity and quietude. Green evidently considered that he was not called upon to bear any part in such active measures as might be decided on, and therefore withdrew from further discussion on the point. It was only when Chips had turned off the gas, and the rest of the boys were composing themselves to sleep, that Baylis and Freckles, in an original costume of jackets worn over night-shirts, presented themselves at Tom's bed-side and asked what he intended doing. Tom, sitting up in bed with an air of great importance, said, 'He's going to see a ghost.'

'Who is? Where?'

'Bruin. Here.'

'How do you mean? Out with it, old boy.'

'I mean this: when Bruin Grant is well into this room, and just laying hands on my trousers, he will be startled by a ghost appearing.'

'Who's going to do it?' asked Baylis.

'I am,' said Tommie. And with this he slipped out of bed, drew a sheet after him, wrapped it around his head and body, and uttered a low groan by way of experiment.

'But suppose when he sees you he bolts with your togs after all?'

'There are only my trousers handy, and they are an old pair I'll make him a present of. My own togs are safely tucked under my bed.'

'Prime!' said Baylis. 'But it's time you were getting into position. He must come soon if he's coming at all.'

Acting upon this advice, Tommie arrayed himself most carefully in the sheet, whitened his face and hands with chalk, and got into position behind a convenient bed, the occupant of which was snoring loudly, all unconscious of the terrible figure crouching at his side.

Baylis and Freckles at once returned to their beds, awaiting in great excitement the advent of Bruin.

Ten minutes passed. It seemed to them an hour. But he did not come. Then another ten minutes without a sign. The two spectators began to doze unknown to themselves, and poor Tom, crouching behind the bed, was making up his mind to return to his own cot and leave his trousers to their fate.

But they had not much longer to wait. A sound was heard outside. Then the handle of the door was turned, and Bruin entered the room. It was a dark night, and, although they had raised their blinds on purpose, nothing more than a dim outline could be seen. The figure advanced towards Tom's bed, seized the trousers from the box at its foot, and was about to move towards the door when an unearthly groan from behind startled him. He turned and saw a white figure, with ghastly face, and pale, outstretched hands, rise full in his view.

With an unearthly yell he dashed from the room, and charged down the dark corridor at full speed, overturning in his flight the mild Mr. Wilkins, who was just coming up to bed with a candle in hand.

Disregarding the latter's cry to stop, he rushed into the room headlong, and immediately went to bed, with his trousers and socks on, just as he had gone out on this disastrous attempt.

Now Mr. Wilkins, although mild and dreamy under ordinary circumstances, was still mindful of the dignity proper to a master, and did not at all agree with being bowled over in this unceremonious manner. His candle was put out by the fall, but, groping on the floor, he soon found the matches, and relit it.

'Now,' he said, in his quiet way, 'I am inclined to think it was Grant who did that. It will be as well to make sure, before taking further steps.'

Acting upon this resolution, he marched off to the fifth's room, bent on discovering the culprit.

His entrance aroused some of the sleepers, but not all. Grant, in particular, was snoring with great regularity and noise. Mr. Wilkins said nothing to the two or three boys who were awake, but made a little tour of inspection round the room. Presently he stopped at a bed, near which there seemed very few clothes for a grown lad.

'Grant!' he said to the sleeper. 'Grant!'

Bruin opened his eyes at once, rubbing them as if to drive away the last remnant of slumber.

'Has anybody carried off your trousers?'

'My trousers, sir?' said Bruin, in confusion; 'my trousers?'

Mr. Wilkins did not wait for any further explanation, but, whisking down the bed-clothes, disclosed the wretched Bruin half-dressed, just as he had returned from the war-path.

'Please, sir —' began the culprit.

'Not a word,' said the master. 'You will account to Dr. Swanage, your own master, for this to-morrow. He does not permit this scouring of the corridors by night, particularly,' added Mr. Wilkins, with great dignity, 'when coupled with the overturning of his assistant-masters.' With this threat he left the room. Meanwhile, the apparition which had caused Bruin's disaster had again resolved itself into little Tosstop, who, refusing for the time being all explanation of the noise to those whom Bruin's abrupt departure had aroused from sleep, got quietly into bed with great satisfaction to himself and his brother conspirators.

On the following morning there was a general wish on their part to see how Bruin looked after his midnight adventures. To their surprise he was not to be found at the breakfast-table.

Later on, when Mr. Wilkins reported to Dr. Swanage what had happened the night before, he was met by the news that Grant was too ill to get up, and that, therefore, the matter must be deferred for a day or two. Fearful that he may have been at fault in threatening the boy without further evidence of his guilt, he at once sought Mrs. Crisp, and told her the whole story.

Mrs. Crisp was no stranger to Bruin's character, having often been the consoler of small boys smarting under his cruelties. She did not, therefore, fear that

Bruin's sickness was of an alarming character, but, on the contrary, connected it with a wish to avoid, if possible, an inquiry into the last night's events.

As soon as her duties would allow, she went upstairs to the fifth's room, and there found Bruin snugly coiled up in bed.

At her entrance he uttered a suppressed groan, and turned a pair of questioning eyes upon her.

'Ah,' said Mrs. Crisp, feeling his pulse; 'a little feverish. Have you any pain?'

'Lots,' said Bruin, with a doleful air; 'my head aches, and—and —'

'Ah, very well, I'll send you up some medicine; and when you have taken that I think you will soon feel well enough to come down again.'

Bruin thanked Mrs. Crisp; but no sooner was she out of the room than he sat up in bed in a very cheerful mood.

'All right,' he said, apparently speaking to Mrs. Crisp, although she was far out of hearing; 'all right, send up the physic. I'll anoint the tiles with it. Send up some breakfast, that's what I want; but I shan't get well just yet.'

Having thus relieved his mind, he lay down in bed, and became an invalid again at once.

In about ten minutes' time he heard steps approaching the door, and at once fell into the semblance of a sweet sleep.

Somebody opened the door and came to the bedside. It was Chips, the porter, carrying in his hand a large bottle of a most nauseous-looking mixture.

'Matron has sent you up some physic, young gen'lman, and hopes you'll take it right off, and get well.'

'All right, Chips; you can put it down on the chair, and leave it.'

'My orders is—Give him one dose at once, and he can take another afterwards if necessary.'

'But I don't feel equal to it just now, Chips; you let it stay there. It will be all right.'

'Wouldn't do at all, sir. Matron will say,—Did he take it? An' I should have to say—Don't know, ma'am. That wouldn't do at all.' With this Chips drew a glass from his pocket and measured out a monstrous dose with a steady hand.

'Is it—is it nasty, Chips?' asked Bruin.

'Smells kind o' queer,' said he, lowering a large nose to the edge of the glass. 'But all physic is nasty. Bless ye, the doctors does it a purpose, so as people shall want to get well.'

'Chips, I—I don't think I shall take it. It's thick.'

'Oh, but you must. Them's my orders.'

'You know I like you, Chips, and there's a shilling in my left-hand waistcoat pocket you can have. Throw the physic out of the window.'

'No, no, sir; that would never do. Take it like a man, and have it over.'

Bruin looked at the porter's face, but there was no sign of relenting there. He took the glass and smelled the mixture. Ugh! And it was thick and slimy, too!

'Chips,' he said, as a last effort, 'I'm not ill, it's all a mistake. I don't want physic.'

'Oh, but you must be ill. Matron said you wanted a dose, and you must make haste and take it.'

Bruin gave up the attempt, shut his eyes, and tossed down the nauseous mixture.

'Now, sir,' said Chips, 'if you ain't better you're to have another in two hours' time.' And with this he left the room.

During the next quarter of an hour poor Bruin had a very unpleasant time of it. Indeed, from the sounds there was no reason to suspect a sham this time. It was a case now of genuine sickness. When the pangs had in a measure gone off, and he had rested a little, he resolved to make the second dose unnecessary by getting up. Even a good caning was preferable to such an experience as he had just gone through. He dressed himself, therefore, and sat in the bedroom until the time at which Chips had threatened to administer the second dose. Then he wended his way slowly downstairs to the class-room used by the fifth and sixth during the day.

When Dr. Swanage saw Bruin he forgot for the time being the accusation of Mr. Wilkins, and remembered only the fit of illness. In his good, kind way he said,—

'Ah, Grant, I'm glad to see you down. Mrs. Crisp said she thought you would soon be well if you took her medicine. Is that so?'

'Yes, sir, thank you, sir,' replied Bruin, who was right glad to escape to his own desk.

At a later period of the day the charge of overturning the third-form master was duly gone into, and, no satisfactory explanation of his night-wanderings being given, he was condemned to lose the next three half-holidays. On thinking over the causes of his flight, Bruin soon became quite convinced that a trick had again been played on him, and he speedily took steps for finding out to whom he was indebted for this last blow.

The result was soon seen in a small note addressed to 'T. Tosstop, Esq.,' and containing these words: 'See if I don't pay you out for my three half-holidays.—J. Grant.' Of this, however, the receiver disdained to take any notice, beyond laying it before his two allies, and asking them who could have betrayed them again. Their unanimous verdict was that Battersley alone could be at the bottom of it, and their attitude towards him became even colder than before. He had, however, given up making advances to them; a result which they always set down to conscious guilt, although it would have been hard to say what other course they could have expected after the many rebuffs he had received at their hands.

The ice still holding, Norman Baylis spent many a pleasant hour upon it, being resolved to make the best of all opportunities before the expected break-up came. On the very next half-holiday after the ghost's appearance he set out alone for some meadows at a distance from the school. Tom was to have gone with him, but some defects in his morning's work had resulted in his attendance being requested at school that afternoon. However, Norman was determined not to be disappointed, and set out without his companion. Arrived at the meadows, he found the expanse of ice amply enough for him to claim a field to himself. This he did, and was soon practising all alone some of those figures in which it was his ambition to excel. After an hour at this he began to wish for a change, and therefore made up his mind to go further afield, and see how far the



An Angry Monkey.

floods extended. This journey involved the crossing of several hedges and fences, a task not easily managed with skates on the feet. At last, in making his way over a rough fence, a strong puff of wind caught him just as he was awkwardly placed on the top. He lost his balance and fell, twisting one leg under him in a way that forced from his lips a cry of pain.
(To be continued.)

AN ANGRY MONKEY.

OH, Miss, take care! you should not tease
My monkey as you do to-day,—
To offer him a bit of cheese,
And then to snatch it quick away!
You've roused his fury once again,
And he can be both rough and rude,



The Safety Lamp.

For even I cannot restrain
My Jacko in his evil mood.

Alas! your pretty hair is torn,
And I must bear the sad disgrace;
But, Miss, be thankful all your life
That Jacko did not scratch your face. D. B.

THE SAFETY-LAMP.




ALL of you have heard about the 'fire-damps' down in the dark, deep coal-mines. They are inflammable gases, which can be breathed, but which explode the instant a flame comes near them. Red-hot or snow-white hot iron will not affect them; but just let a little flickering flame come in contact with the gas, and in an instant there is an explosion as terrible

as if a firebrand had been thrown into a whole powder-magazine. The rocks are rent and hurled in frightful masses on the heads of the poor miners. The shafts, too, through which they pass up and down, are often closed with the rubbish, so that it takes many days to dig down to the sufferers again. Many are killed outright, and many others are imprisoned, to die a lingering death by starvation.

A great and kind-hearted man spent a long time in inventing a safety-lamp to protect the light which the miners must use down in these regions of gloom. It was found that a net-work of wire-gauze over the flame was a perfect protection. The gas could not be lighted through this screen. So these safety-lamps came to be used in all mines where there was danger of fire-damp, and no doubt thousands upon thousands of lives have been saved by them.



THE SOLDIER'S STORY.

 ND so you are a Soldier? and you really fought the foe?

Do tell me all about it, for I'd dearly love to know.
I mean to be a Soldier too, when I'm a grown-up man;

And won't I fight the Russians! Yes, and beat them if I can.

The grave old Soldier listened, and then he sadly smiled,

You should not think of war, my boy, you're nothing but a child.

And when you're grown a sturdy lad, God give the country peace,

For well I wish we saw the day when fightings all should cease.

Yes, boy, I was in battle, and it was a deadly fray;
I lost my arm, and in my side a bullet lies this day.

You see the grey-coats swarmed around, on Alma's misty height,

They fought their best, I'm sure they did; but still we gained the fight.

You don't know what a battle is, and may you never see

The sickening sights so common to my comrades and to me;

When the cannon's awful roar is heard, and when the murky air

Is thick with shot and shell, when blood and death are everywhere.

I'd like to tell you of a lad, who when he was a boy,
Lived near to my old home—he was his mother's pride and joy;

A likely lad, good-hearted too; he would not hurt a fly;

And yet, to be a Soldier bold it was his daily cry.

I almost wondered at the youth, because, you see, his heart

Was given to Annie Lee; and yet the two would have to part.

But the war-fever filled his veins—at home he would not stay,

And close by me, on Alma's height, he fought that awful day.

Well, boy, the fight was over; dead and dying lay around,

The night-air dried our wounds as there we lay on the bloody ground.

I heard a voice, 'twas not far off, and then a stifled cry,

'Oh, give me water! one sweet drop of water ere I die!'

My boy—'twas Ned! I knew the voice, but ere I spoke a word,

Each wounded man took up the cry—it pierced me like a sword;

'Water! water! oh, give us some; we've fought and done our best!'

But, boy, 'twould sicken your heart if I should tell you all the rest.

Ah, well! we were in Hospital; they laid us side by side,

Poor Ned, I dare say he thought of her who was to be his bride;

But he never spoke to me—and oh! his face was stern and cold,

And instead of twenty-four he seemed at once to have grown old.

He was wounded worse than I, an awful gash was on his face;

Poor lad, he tried to hide it, just as though 'twere some disgrace;

Then I knew he thought of Annie, and thought what she would do,

When such a lover as he returned from the battle field to woo.

For that was not all, he'd lost his arm, his good right arm, as well;

And 'Why should I live?' he said, with a bitterness none could tell.

I tried to quiet him down a bit, but once, as I lay in bed,

There came a letter from home to me, but not a line for Ned!

He did not die, for life was strong in that sore wounded frame;

And though our hearts be sad and sore we must live on all the same.

And so we both went home, and many a comrade too.
A ghastly sight we were, but then just think what we'd come through!

Ned's mother I knew was dead, my letter had told me so,

And coming just when it did, he felt it a cruel blow;
For he had no home, you see, and Annie had given him up;

Ah! that was the bitterest drop in poor Ned's bitter cup.

When we went home I said to Ned, 'Old fellow, you'll live with me,

My mother's cottage is not so small but what 'twill do for three.'

He pressed my hand, 'So be it,' he said, 'till I can turn me round,

And find some home—though better far had I been below the ground.'

Well, when we reached the station, some folk were there you know;

They cried 'Hurrah!' but Ned drew back as though he'd got a blow.

'Let us wait,' he said, 'till it grows dark;' but spite of his alarms,

They drew us on, and next thing I knew I was in mother's arms.

Oh, the dear old place! 'twas just the same—the old grey cat, I ween,

Was purring close beside the fire, as though war had never been.

And my dear mother, she gently drew me down upon a seat,

And placed a pillow at my back, and a footstool at my feet.

But I thought of Ned, for he must get a welcome too this day,
And so I turned me round—but what? it took my breath away
To see him sit just at the door, all in his soldierly guise,
With Annie's arms about his neck, while tears were in her eyes!

She took his hand in hers and said, 'This hand belongs to me;
Oh, Ned! how did you think that I could ever faithless be?
Your own poor Annie! But never more you'll doubt my love to you?'
Ah! that was a happy day, my boy, for Ned, and for me too.

Well, they were wed, and only think! I was the bridegroom's man!
The villagers cried 'Hurrah!' and all around the little children ran.
And now that mother is dead I live with them, do you see;
And though my heart is sometimes sad, they're main and kind to me.

D. B. McKean.



MIND YOUR DOUBLE-U'S.

WARM weather, Walter! Welcome warm weather! We were wishing winter would wane, weren't we?

'We were well wearied with waiting,' whispered Walter, wearily. Wan, white, woe-begone was Walter; wayward, wilful, worn with weakness, wasted, waxing weaker whenever winter's wild, withering winds were wailing. Wholly without waywardness was

Winifred, Walter's wise, womanly watcher, who, with winsome, wooing ways, was well-beloved.

'We won't wait, Walter; while weather's warm, we'll wander where woodlands wave—won't we?'

Walter's wonted wretchedness wholly waned.

'Why, Winnie, we'll walk where we went when we were with Willie; we'll weave wild-flower wreaths, watch woodmen working, worms wriggling, windmills whirling, water-mills wheeling; we will win wild whortleberries, witness wheat winnowed.'

Wisbeach Woods were white with wild-flowers; warm, westerly winds whispered where willows were waving; wood-pigeons, wrens, wood-peckers were warbling wild wood-notes. Where Wisbeach watermill's waters, which were wholly waveless, widened, were water-lilies waxen white. Winifred wove wreaths with woodbine, whitethorn, wall-flowers, whilst Walter whittled wooden wedges with willow wands. Wholly without warning, wild, wet winds woke within Wisbeach Woods, whistling

where Winifred wandered with Walter; weeping willows were wailing weirdly, waging war with wind-tossed waters. Winifred's wary watchfulness waked.

'Walter, we won't wait.'

'Which way, Winnie?'

Winifred wavered.

'Why, where were we wandering? Wisbeach Woods widen whichever way we walk; where's Wisbeach white wicket? where Winston's water-mill?'

Wistfully Walter witnessed Winifred's wonder.

'Winnie, Winnie, we were wrong, wholly wrong, wandering within wild ways. Wayfaring, weather-beaten waifs, we're well-nigh worn-out.'

Winifred waited where, within wattled woodwork walls, waggons, wheel-barrows, wains were waiting, weighty with withered wood. Walter, warmly wrapped with Winifred's well-worn wadded water-proof, was wailing woefully, wholly wearied. Winifred, who, worn with watching, well-nigh weeping, was wistfully, wakefully waiting Willie's well-known whistle, wholly wished Walter's well-being warranted. With well-timed wisdom, Walter was wound with white worsted wrappers, which wonderfully well withstood winter's withering, whistling winds. Wholly without warm wrappers was Winifred, who, with womanly wisdom, was watching Walter's welfare, warding Walter's weakness.

'When will Willie wend where we wait?' wearily wondered Walter.

'Whist, Walter!' whispered Winnie; 'who was whooping?'

'Whereabouts?'

Welcome whistling was waking Wisbeach Woods when winter's windy warfare waxed weaker. Winnie! Walter! Winifred's wakefulness was well-grounded. 'We're well, Willie; we're where Winston's waggons wait.' Without waiting, Willie was within Winston's woodwork walls. 'Welcome! welcome, Willie.' Winnie was weeping with weariness, with watching Walter, with wayfaring.

'Why, Winnie! wise, watchful, warm-hearted Winnie!' Willie whispered wheedlingly, 'we won't weep; Walter's well. What were Walter without Winnie?'

Wholly wonderful was Winifred's womanly wisdom, which well warranted weakly Walter's welfare. Whenever wandering within Wisbeach Woods with Winnie, Walter would whisper, 'What were Walter without Winnie? wise, watchful, warm-hearted Winnie?'

JIM AND THE CROWS.

MY little dog Jim is about the ugliest little animal you would meet in a day's walk. He is black, and has a rough, shaggy sort of coat; his ears have not been cut, and so they stand up on either side of his head when he is excited, and look like two little horns. He is very skinny, and I am not surprised, for until the last few days he never would eat his dinner like other dogs, but lived on very little indeed; but a funny thing happened one day, after which and ever since he has eaten well and heartily. I must tell you the story.



Jim and the Crows.

I was sitting in the dining-room after dinner, and had just given a small plateful of bones and scraps to the butler to put outside in the veranda for Master Jim; a thing which I did every day, as I can never depend upon the servant feeding him properly. I had, as I tell you, just sent him his dinner, when I thought I would go out and see if he was eating it; so I opened the door and discovered the butler doing all he could to entice him near his dinner, but all to no purpose. Jim just once came near and sniffed, ate one little piece, and then tried to slink away; so I

told the man just to leave the food on the plate, and perhaps later on Master Jim might feel hungry.

He had scarcely gone when some crows, which were perched in a tree close to the veranda, hopped down, and one more impudent than the rest alighted on the edge of the plate, and taking a bone in his beak flew away with it; no sooner did Jim, who was some little distance off, see this than he rose with a bark, and trotting up to his dinner, ate it every bit, and curious to say, he never again refused to eat it if it was placed in that particular spot.



"Is that you, Baylis? What's the matter?"

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 276.)



AYLIS sat up on the ice for a few minutes to collect himself, and then tried to rise to his feet. But no sooner did the weight come upon the injured leg than he was glad to drop upon the ice again at once. There was evidently something wrong.

Thinking that in this state he might perhaps manage better without skates, he took them off, and then made another effort to rise. But it was no more successful than the last.

Norman next sat down upon the ice and considered the situation. No other skaters were within two fields of him, and it was very doubtful whether a shout would be heard by them. He might, therefore, remain there for an hour or so without help coming.

But on looking around, he remembered that the high-road was only two or three fields off in one direction, and he thought it best to try to reach it, although the ground rose rapidly on that side, and he would soon be off the ice.

Having decided on this plan he at once began to execute it. Walking was quite out of the question; if he moved at all it would have to be upon his hands and knees. In this way he slowly reached the edge of the ice, passed with great difficulty a stile, and then crawled across a field, at the top of which the road ran.

It was a long journey, and many times he had to stop, conscious all the time that his ankle was swelling and becoming every moment more painful. Arrived at the high road, he sat down upon a convenient heap of stones, feeling very cold and dismal, but hoping that some conveyance would pass that way in which he might get carried at least a part of the way home.

He had been sitting there for some time without the arrival of anything which was likely to help him, when a well-known figure came into sight around a bend in the road.

It was Herbert Battersley returning, alone of course, from a country walk. He did not see the figure on the heap of stones until quite close. Then he stopped at once.

'Halloo! Is that you, Baylis? What's the matter?'

'Nothing,' said Baylis, sulkily. He was ashamed of the falsehood the moment it was uttered. But then Battersley was a sneak, and had no right to speak to him.

'Look here, I know there is something wrong, so you may as well tell me.'

'Thanks, I would sooner keep it to myself.'

'Look here, Baylis, you have a spite against me for something; and you're wrong. But I shan't argue about that now; what's the matter, old fellow?'

Baylis did not find it so easy to resist this appeal, especially when the speaker sat down on the stones by his side.

'It's my foot,' he said slowly; 'but you can't do any good, so you may as well go on.'

'Oh, yes, I can; which is it? Ah, I see, this one. Whew! you have done it! You've sprained your ankle, and badly, too!'

'Is that it?'

'That's it, and no mistake. Now, how are you going to get home?'

'Don't know,' said Baylis, dolefully. He was beginning to soften. 'I thought of waiting till a waggon or something came along.'

'That will never do. Your coat is warm enough for skating in, but not for sitting about on these stones. I'll tell you what, you had better get on my back, and let me carry you in.'

'No, no!' said the other; 'you couldn't do it; besides —'

'Oh, yes, I can. Now then, ready? With this he gave Baylis a 'back,' and the other, scrambling on to it as best he could, was soon fairly mounted.

In this way these two, lately divided, went on amicably towards home.

CHAPTER VII.

THE first part of the journey towards St. Egbert's was got over in silence. Battersley, with a stout lad like Baylis on his back, had very little breath left for conversation. Norman, on the other hand, was too much puzzled by the situation in which he found himself to be at first disposed to talk.

Why was Battersley carrying him home like this? Was it just in order to curry favour, and get into his company again, notwithstanding past offences? Or had they been mistaken after all in calling him a sneak? On thinking the past over, he remembered that Battersley had not made friends with certain other fellows, who were always under a ban for the same offences as that he was accused of. If birds of a feather flock together, why had he not joined them?

He came, rather reluctantly it must be confessed, to the conclusion that there may have been some mistake in this matter. And having got thus far, he felt it only fair to confess it.

'I say,' he began, 'this isn't fair, you know, after the way we've been treating you lately.'

'Don't say anything about that now,' said the other.

'Oh, but I must. You know the fellows said you split on us; but I don't believe you did now.'

'Thanks, old boy; I'm glad to hear you say it. But what made you ever think it was true?'

'They said they saw you talking to Nicholson just before he and Bruin got hold of me.'

'So I was.'

'And we thought you must have split on us.'

'I wouldn't have thought that of you.'

'No, I know. It was awfully mean of us. But what made you talk to him?'

'He took me in by a pretended message he sent.'

'What did he do that for?'

'Oh, never mind about that now. I can see our chimneys in the distance.'

'Yes, but I want to know. What did he get you there for?'

'The same reason that they collared you.'

'What, did they lick you, too?'

'Yes, but never mind that now.'

'Yes, I shall. But Green will say they made you give up our names.'

'They tried to; but they didn't.'

'Look here; put me down. Put me down, I say. I'm not going to be carried by you after acting in that low way towards you.'

But he was really not in a condition to struggle, and Battersley had his own way in the matter. This over, Baylis continued,—

'Then they said it must have been you who told Bruin that Tosstop was the ghost.'

'That wasn't likely, seeing that I sent him word Bruin was coming.'

'Was that you? We thought it was Leslie.'

'Leslie knew about it. He has been very jolly lately, since I told him about this business.'

'What made you tell him?'

'Oh, he found me rather down in the dumps one day, and led me on till I told him the whole thing.'

'He's a brick.'

'Yes; it would have been a dull time for me lately if he had not taken pity on my doleful state.'

After this they jogged along in silence for some time, until the playground gates were reached. As their little procession moved towards the house, it, of course, led to some comments from the few lads there; but none of those most concerned were to be seen.

Battersley, having had a last rest at a low wall just outside, struggled gamely on with his burden, until he finally deposited him in Mrs. Crisp's room. That good body was out at the time, but he ventured to lay the invalid down on the roomy old sofa, and to take the boot off his injured foot. This was a task not done without care on the one side and a good deal of pain on the other. It was hardly over when the matron bustled in.

Baylis was better off than the Winchester boy in our time, who, when helped to the matron with rather an awkward sprained ankle, was told that it was 'all stummuck,' and provided with a large bottle of medicine suited to a disordered digestion. Mrs. Crisp was of another order. Bustling about the room with many 'poor lads,' and 'it will soon be wells,' she skilfully bathed and bandaged the wounded member, and gave the patient some tea.

'Now,' she said, 'you must go to bed at once in the infirmary, and stay there to-morrow, too. And it will be days before you will walk about on both feet, so you must take in a stock of patience. But how am I to get you upstairs?'

'I'll do it, matron,' said Battersley; 'I'll carry him up on my back.'

'I doubt if you'll manage it up those stairs.'

'Oh, yes, I will; I brought him up there, you know.'

'Hadn't Smallpiece better do it?'

'Oh, Chips? I'd sooner do it myself.'

'Yes; let Battersley carry me,' said the patient.

Very gently, therefore, he was helped into the old position, and in this way taken downstairs and up by the other staircase to the sick-room.

He had scarcely got him comfortably into bed, when Tosstop and Freckles rushed into the room.

'Halloo, old boy, what's this?' they cried in one breath.

'Nothing much, only I've sprained my ankle, and the matron has sent me to bed.'

Whilst this question was being put and answered, they both looked suspiciously at Battersley, who had retreated to the other end of the room.

'It's all right about him,' said the patient. 'It's all a mistake. He didn't split on you, Tom, though they tried to make him; and he sent you that note about Bruin coming after your togs.'

'No?'

'He did, though.'

Neither of them spoke for a moment. Then, by common consent, they walked up to Battersley and asked pardon for the mistake in a manly way.

It was a pleasant party that sat around the invalid's bed that afternoon, for neither were of that nature which seems to find pleasure in enmity and strife.

'But now,' said Freckles, 'what we have to find out is who the sneak really was.'

'Never mind about him,' said Battersley; 'you have paid me out, so he may as well go free.'

'He won't the next time,' said Tosstop.

For about a week Baylis had to stay in his bedroom nursing the ankle. It would have been a very dull time with him, but for the kindness of Battersley and the others, who brought him books, and came to spend an occasional hour there with him. But none were like Battersley. Mrs. Crisp called him 'nurse,' and he certainly tended his friend with all possible care. His quiet, retiring nature, seemed drawn out by this accident, and he began to show quite unlooked-for signs of cheerfulness and activity. Indeed, one day his zeal for his friend nearly led him into a fight with a boy, bigger than himself, supposed to be ill, but who would have the window open just opposite Baylis, in order that he might entertain himself by pouring water on an occasional passer-by in the playground. However, the matter was settled in quite another way, for the second master, happening suddenly to put his head out of the window just below, received a sousing meant for a small boy beneath, and promptly rushed upstairs to execute judgment on the offender. Upon another occasion strife broke out between the Reds and the Blues sleeping in the room, and there was a strong suspicion that one or two missiles which struck Baylis's bed were thrown with that express purpose. Upon this Battersley charged into the fray, and performed prodigies of valour, in the course of which he was knocked down by a swinging blow with a bolster, and received a very pretty black eye by falling against the corner of a box. But these were trifles, not worthy of being mentioned beside the great fact that the invalid and nurse were daily being drawn more closely together.

(To be continued.)





CAPO DI MONTI.

CAPO DI MONTI, Naples, is chiefly noted for the porcelain factory founded by Charles III. of Italy in 1736, a sovereign who was an enthusiast in the matter of porcelain. He is said even to have excelled in this taste Augustus III., who was by Frederick of Prussia nicknamed 'The Porcelain King,' and who is recorded to have exchanged a regiment of dragoons for a huge china vase of great beauty. Charles III. carried his love of porcelain work so far that he laboured with his own hands at the factory of Capo di Monti, and held an annual fair in front of the royal

palace at Naples, where there was a shop dedicated to the sale of the royal handiwork. It need scarcely be said that all who desired to win the king's favour pressed forward to buy.

The porcelain of Capo di Monti is no mere copy of other porcelain: it has a beauty of its own, the design being taken from natural objects, such as shells, corals, and the human figure, all of these being embossed in high relief and executed with marvellous grace. The porcelain of Capo di Monti has been pronounced by connoisseurs as perhaps the most beautiful porcelain ever produced in Europe.

M. G. M.



Bunny fighting the Cat.

OUR PET RABBIT.

A True Story.

SOME years ago we had a present of a young lop-eared rabbit, with a soft black-and-white coat and bright dark eyes.

Now rabbits are often thought to be rather stupid animals, but ours soon proved himself an oddity. One day we opened the door of his cage and tempted him to come out with a handful of oats; and 'Bunny' not

only came out, but soon learned to jump up into my lap, or would come to me from any distance for a lump of sugar or some other dainty. Liberty is sweet; and from that time we had much trouble in shutting up our favourite. He always managed in some way to get free, pushing his body through the wires in a wonderful manner.

That summer we had some fine phlox plants, and one of Bunny's favourite amusements was to strip off every leaf, raising himself by his hind legs until the

top was reached, and nothing but a bare stick remained of our pretty flowers.

One day he found his way into the house, and we heard the 'pat-pat' of his hind-legs on the floor. After this he would often come into the sitting-room, and first frighten away the cat, who much disliked him, and then take her place in front of the fire, stretching himself full length on the hearthrug. Sometimes he would share an apple with one of the children, or lie in a corner, his sharp teeth grating away at a piece of carrot.

Once we were aroused in the middle of the night by a policeman, who came to tell us that our rabbit was wandering about the roads. We gave him permission to catch him if he could, well knowing that it was no easy matter; in fact, hardly any one but myself could do so: but at my call he would come in a moment. I need hardly say that the policeman did not arrest Mr. Bunny, and he was none the worse for his midnight ramble. At last, however, the neighbours began to complain of his mischievous habits, and we were obliged to get a strong cage made, from which it was impossible for him to escape. To our great sorrow, the very first night he was placed in it somebody came into the garden and carried him off—perhaps for the sake of his beautiful fur, for he had grown into a very handsome rabbit; at any rate, we never could tell what had become of our pet.

TOM AND HARRY.

A Story for Boys.



SHALL learn a trade, I shall. You are as good as your own master when you have a trade at your fingers' ends.

So spake Tom Billett, wagging his head in a very solemn and decided way. It was an opinion he had heard more than once from his father before his death, and he believed in its truth.

'A trade! Pooh! Black your face in a smithy, or poison yourself as a painter, or something like that! I'm going to be a clerk, I am. Just look at Stimson, how he comes out on a Sunday!'

It was Harry Furness who said this. He, too, had no father, but his mother was in a very good way of business in the greengrocery and retail coal line. Having only Harry's elder sister to help her, she had much wished him on leaving school to take a share in the work, with the prospect of one day being master himself.

Harry considered the proposal a dreadful insult. What! weigh potatoes, and sell sixpennyworths, or even pennyworths of coal to people! To be told, 'Look sharp, young man, with them greens,' by some low woman, to whom he would have to say 'Thank you,' when she paid her money! Why, the very idea made the blood run cold in his veins! Was it for this that he had got into the sixth standard at school, learnt a little science, which he did not understand, and made wonderful geometrical drawings with a pair of compasses and a neat little ruler?

No; he was going to be a young clerk, with clean hands and a stand-up collar, a walking-stick, and even a pair of gloves on Sundays, just as Stimson had.

So at last his mother gave her consent, and, as the boys came home from school together that day, Harry was able to announce what his own future was to be.

Tom did not believe very much in this grandeur. His own mother kept a laundry, and he thought more about being able to earn good wages and help her, than of imitating Stimson or any others of the pale-faced, round-shouldered young fellows he saw lounging about the streets on Sunday in fine clothes, which seemed to make them very uncomfortable.

Soon after this conversation Tom Billett was apprenticed to a firm of engineers, under whom he would learn to be a 'fitter.' About the same time Harry Furness entered a merchant's counting-house as office-boy, though he chose to call himself the junior clerk.

When Tom came home from his work each evening, he generally looked as though he had been working with a sweep; whilst Harry never had anything more than a few spots of ink on his fingers. So he would make great sport of Tom.

'Well, I never! Have they been making you sweep the office chimney?'

'No fear,' said Tom, cheerily.

'Well, you look uncommonly like it.'

'Do I? But it doesn't matter.'

'Oh, no; I suppose not. Why, I wouldn't be seen walking through the streets like that, not if you would—if you would give me a sovereign down!'

'Why?'

'Why? What's the good of saying that? Look at yourself.'

'I don't see anything wrong. If I am dirty, it's honestly come by in doing my work.'

'No business to do such work.'

'Somebody must do it. Why shouldn't I?'

'Why, let them do it as like it.'

'Well, that's me, then,' said Tom, forgetting his grammar.

'Oh, very well. But don't expect me to see you if we come across each other in the street. I should consider it a disgrace to the firm.'

In accordance with this decision, Master Harry took an early opportunity of elevating his nose in the air, and passing his friend without a word or a nod when next they met.

And so two or three years passed by. Tom was daily becoming more skilful at his trade, and received good wages for an apprentice. Harry, in the meantime, had made one or two changes, but still found himself earning but little more than when he first left school. In order to keep him in such clothes as he thought proper to his position, his mother had often to find him with money from her own business. He asked his master for a higher salary, and was told that a boy fresh from school would do his work for less money; if he was not satisfied, he could leave.

Accordingly, he began to look out for something better. But this looking out went on month after month, and still nothing came of it. If he had been

quieter in his habits he might still have lived at home upon his wages. But his desire to imitate Stimson had led him into public-houses, music-halls, and other places, where his shillings vanished in fewer moments than it took hours to earn them.

At last his mother began to complain. She did not think it fair that his sister and herself should go on working to supply Harry with money. He must spend less or earn more.

Harry took a desperate step. He asked for higher wages, and, receiving the old answer, gave his employers a week's notice.

On the Saturday afternoon upon which he came home for the last time from the office, he met Tom Billett near his mother's door. He was no cleaner than usual, but he looked happy, and had the frame of a young giant now.

'You look merry, Tom.'

'Well, you see, I was out of my time last week, and I am just bringing home my first week's full wages.'

'And how much is it?'

'Thirty shillings,' said Tom. 'But some of our best men get twice that, especially when they work overtime.'

'And I was only getting fifteen!'

'Ah, but then you don't know a trade.'

Harry Furness had a sorry time of it after this. Nobody seemed to want young clerks, for every place advertised had two or three hundred applicants crowding around the doors. Week after week passed, but no place received him. His spirits fell lower and lower, until at last he told the once-de-spised Tom of his troubles.

'If I were you, Harry, I would just stay at home and help my mother. That business is going away to nothing just for want of a man to look after it.'

Harry promised to think it over.

The next day being Sunday, his sister got him to go to church. When he was a clerk, he had thought church and chapel-going only fit for women and stupid. Now he was in a meeker spirit. To his astonishment, the preacher gave them a sermon on the dignity of honest labour; and Harry came away resolved to work amongst the potatoes and coals without any more false shame.

He did so. And although he sometimes felt a twinge as some old companion passed and saw him taking the money for a cauliflower or a bundle of wood, he found himself, his mother, and his sister, so much happier for his own change, that he never repented following Tom's advice. A. R. B.

A NOBLE OLD FARMER.

IN Germany, during a war, a captain of cavalry was ordered out upon a foraging expedition. He marched to the district assigned to him. It was a lonely valley, but finding in the midst of it a small cottage he knocked at the door; it was opened by an old man, who leant upon a staff.

'Father,' said the officer, 'show me a field where I may set my troop to forage.'

The old man led them out of the valley, and after

a quarter of an hour's march they came to a fine field of barley.

'Here is what we are in search of,' exclaimed the captain.

'Wait a few minutes,' said the old man. 'Follow me a little further.'

At the distance of a mile they arrived at another field of barley. The troop alighted, cut down the grain, trussed it, and rode off.

The officer then said to his conductor, 'You have given yourself and us needless trouble; the first field was better than this.'

'Very true, sir,' replied the good old man; 'but it was not mine.'

NATURE'S GEMS.

SIGH not, little maid, for costly things,
For glittering gaudy gems,
That shimmer and shine in rich men's rings,
And in princely diadems.

For around you now is open to view
A wonderful treasure-box,
Never needing, to keep it safe, the aid
Of intricate Brahmah locks.

My words, with a smile of unbelief,
And a titter of fun you greet;
But gems, I affirm, you are trampling now
Under your thoughtless feet.

There—gather a bunch of sweet fresh flowers,
And mingle with them some green;
Then come and stand by my side awhile,
And I'll tell you what I mean.

Gems of the diamond and emerald kind
Were never a part of our lot,
But we'll cherish the gems we have, not sigh
For those that we have not got.

This daisy now, so modest and sweet,
I deem, though not so rare,
As a precious pearl from the bounding sea,
To be every jot as fair.

This bluebell, too, from yon green knoll
By tender dewdrop kissed,
Is lovelier far to my poor mind
Than the glittering amethyst.

And the emerald that glints and gleams
On the head of an eastern queen,
Vanquishes not in a battle of hues,
This beautiful spray of green.

I see by your smile, my dear little girl,
My riddle at last you have guessed,
I'm sure you think with me, that the gems
Of Nature are far the best.

Fairer than gems in kingly crowns
Are flowers on the lowliest sod;
Gems owe their beauty to human hands,
Flowers theirs to the hand of God.

L. H. OUTRAM.



"This daisy now, so modest and sweet,
I deem, though not so rare,
As a precious pearl from the bounding sea,
To be every jot as fair.

"This bluebell, too, from you green knoll
By tender dewdrop kissed,
Is lovelier far to my poor mind
Than the glittering amethyst."



Painting Green's Face.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 283.)



HE interest aroused by the resistance to Bruin and his party having subsided, the youngsters of the third and fourth were able to give their whole attention to upholding the dignity of their particular colours; and their ardour was much increased towards the middle of the term by the fact that each party now issued its magazine. Rumour amongst the Reds said that Leslie had been unusually busy, having a large store of productions submitted to his care as editor; and the Reds anxiously looked for the coming issue as one which should show clearly enough the vast superiority of their side.

Both were out at last, and gradually made their way through the school. When they reached the third and fourth, party spirit began to run higher than ever. The utter contempt expressed by Reds for *The Blue Gazette* was only equalled by that which Blues felt for *The Crimson Chronicle*, and neither would allow the other to be in any single point the better book. The chief authors on either side were exalted into heroes by their admirers, and for a time were even greater favourites than the two or three fellows who had brought much glory to the school by their skill and pluck on the cricket and football-field. Amongst the elder lads the contest was carried on, for the most part, in a good-natured way; but amongst the younger element it was felt on either side that certain insults could only be wiped out with blood. In the Blue magazine was an essay, in which it was clearly shown that the colour red was, and always had been, associated with everything that was bad; whilst the blue heavens and the blue waves were called to witness the poetical and honourable ideas always connected with that colour. On the other hand, the Red magazine had a poem by an anonymous writer which, its readers felt, was a complete answer to this composition. Moreover, it had this advantage—a poem was easily learned, and then it could be recited in the ears of an enemy. To remember an essay, or even its most cutting sentences, was not so easy. Accordingly, the Red boys routed their antagonists by frequent repetition of the following lines, headed, 'Which shall be my Colour?'—

'The Red and the Blue are opponents, they say;
Can you tell how to choose me the better?
Just open your ears to the claims that appear
On each side, and you'll know to the letter.

When winter is here with its frost and its rime,
And the snow in the valley reposes,
Then red are the tints on the healthiest cheeks,
But blue is the colour of noses.

When the red blood is flowing full swift in our veins,
And we challenge the foe, who refuses;
Then blue from his terror are each coward's cheeks,
And blue is the tint of his bruises.

The soldiers, who fight for our country and home,
Are clad in the uniform scarlet;
But tunics of blue wear police, who pursue
Some rascal or pilfering varlet.

As the milk that is blue has been watered and skimmed—

Only fit for the kittens, good mousers!
So the lads that are blue are but sickly and weak,
A disgrace to the manhood of trousers.

Then with bonnets of blue and with petticoats, too,
Let us clothe the poor mortals who like 'em,
But the flag of the free ever crimson shall be:
So we'll pity blue girls, and not strike 'em.'

This poem was an undoubted victory for the Reds. They knew it, and so did their opponents, and the strife of parties waxed hotter and hotter. In the third and fourth the Blues were the more numerous party, but not the bolder. However, this production so excited their anger, that it was not easy to ward off a breach of the peace. Green, as a loyal Blue, always came well to the front when there was any talking to be done. It often happened that a little exchange of compliments took place between the parties whilst the morning ablutions were taking place. At such times his eloquence was great. But he always retired to the remotest background whenever there seemed the least chance of coming to blows.

Now this conduct was very hateful to lads like Freckles and Tosstop, who made up their minds to read him a lesson. Green was a very heavy sleeper, and the consequence was that, having gone to bed one night after denouncing the Reds in very strong terms, he woke up in the morning with a curious sense of stiffness about his face.

No sooner did he sit up in bed than a laugh rang around the whole room.

'What's the joke?' he asked, rolling his huge eyes from one side of the room to the other. But there was no reply. 'Now, then,' he continued, 'I know somebody's up to some game. But you won't take me in, so don't think it, though my name is Green.'

The laughter still going on, he jumped out of bed, and seized the smallest boy he could find.

'Now, then,' he said in terrific tones, 'tell me what you're laughing at, or else I'll break every bone in your body, if you were as big as Goliath.'

As there seemed small chance of little Titmarch making such a sudden expansion, this was a very safe remark.

At last the little boy, frightened at the loud voice and rolling eyes, gathered courage to say, 'Please, Green, it's your face.'

He rushed to a looking-glass, and found on his forehead and on each cheek an enormous dab of red. 'Halloo, Green!' said one wit, 'so you've changed your colours!'

'Very sorry,' said another, 'but we couldn't have you amongst us at any price, though we must allow it's a very pretty way of showing your wish to change.'

'I don't want to change. I only want to know who did this.'

But his wish was not gratified; and the lesson had such good effect, that his blusterings were not heard during the rest of that term.

In time, too, the effects of the party literature began to wear off, and everybody thought a good deal more of counting the weeks to the holidays than of standing up for Blues or Reds. So the remainder of that term passed without any important events taking place which are likely to interest the readers of this history. One thing, however, is certain, namely, that Baylis and Battersley had become day by day closer friends, and that not without some profit to each. Baylis felt ashamed of flying into a rage at this or that, when there was somebody near who was certain to take the same thing quite calmly. He was also actually beginning to learn the difficult task of saying 'No.' On the other hand, anybody could see that Battersley had 'come out of his shell' very much during the last few weeks of the term, and was much improved from a boy's point of view. Both were looking forward to other happy terms together, confident that this had been their first and last quarrel.

Alas! how little can we guess of the future!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Black Monday of the following term was a blustering April day. But the high wind and showers of rain failed to damp the spirits of the lads as they returned to St. Egbert's. There were but few additions to the school, as most of the new boys joined either in January or in the autumn. Neither do we miss any familiar faces. Nicholson returned with some collars, if possible, higher than those he had worn before. Bruin Grant came back, evidently ready to begin again on any small boy who might cross his path. Leslie was there as before, hopping about with his crutch, and talking to smaller boys with a condescension quite overpowering in one of the dreaded sixth. And last of all, the youthful Tosstop, with his friends Baylis, Battersley, and Freckles, also arrived; Green did not appear until a day or two afterwards.

Tosstop and the rebels of the preceding term had made up their minds to repeat the barring out, if Bruin and his friends had any intention of making a raid upon their class-room. It was found, however (Leslie being their informant) that they were not likely to be disturbed, for Bruin had felt the laugh at his defeat too much to risk another such repulse unless success appeared almost certain. He had made up his mind, therefore, to give them one quiet term, and so to delude them into unwatchfulness on the next occasion.

The ceremony of choosing colours was, however, conducted in the usual way. The first two new boys chose Red, the others, stimulated by the watchful Bruin, elected for Blue. The two new Reds were brothers named Sharp, and both were placed in the fourth. The elder, Andrew by name, or, as he soon came to be called, A Sharp, was a tall, thin lad, with a pale, narrow face, and straight black hair. His brother Duncan, or D Sharp, was a repetition of the same figure on a rather smaller scale. They both seemed quite resolved to be thought pleasant lads and good companions.

When others explored their boxes for delicacies on the first night of their new term, the Sharps brought

out an overwhelming display of good things, and won their way to the hearts of most by an ample distribution of cake. They were said to have been born in India, and when Tosstop called upon somebody to sing, or hum them a song before the festivities ended, A Sharp gave them a recollection of India in the familiar lines:—

'I very good Bengali baboo,
In Calcutta I long time stop.
Rum Jun Tundra Ghost my name,
In Rhudda Bazaar I keep my shop.
Very good Hindoo, smoke my hookah,
Eat my dolbat every day;
When night comes make very good poojah,
And upon the tom-tom play.'

And most of the lads, with the taste of the cake still in their mouths, agreed that the Sharps were the most desirable addition to the school in general and their room in particular.

Battersley was, perhaps, alone in not falling in love with them at first sight, and he was bound to confess to himself that the feeling of distaste he felt for them was a most unreasonable thing, not founded upon any proper grounds. Why should you dislike a person merely because he has a hatchet-face, straight black hair, and uncertain eyes that do not long look straight into your own? He fought honestly against this feeling; but, nevertheless, it was not put to flight. After a few days he began to feel that jealousy was really the cause of it, for both A Sharp and D Sharp took pleasure in Baylis's company, so that the two friends began to see rather less of each other than either would have thought possible at the end of the preceding term. Green, too, when he arrived, soon showed a fondness for their society, although his advances were not at first received with the gratitude he seemed to expect. As for Tosstop and Freckles, they were too much wrapped up in their own partnership to see very clearly what was going on with the Sharps.

At last Battersley was moved to remind Baylis of their old agreement. Meeting him one day alone he began at once to relieve his mind.

'I hardly see anything of you now, old fellow.'

'Nonsense!'

'No, but I don't. How many times have we been out together this term?'

'Why, we went out for a long stroll the very first Wednesday we came back!'

'Yes: and since then?'

'Why—I don't think we *have* been far since. But then, you know, it isn't my fault, you never propose it.'

'Not last week?'

'Well, I had promised A Sharp to go out with him.'

'All right, old boy; it's awfully mean of me, I know, but I can't help being a bit jealous.'

'Never mind, we're chums, and are going to stick to each other, you know: aren't we?'

'Yes, I should think so.' And with this they fell on other subjects. For a few days after this the old friendship came out as strongly as ever; then it began rapidly to decline once more, until the Sharps had quite stepped into the place once filled by Battersley, although he still considered himself bound to his friend.



The Dead Tree.

One day during the third week of the term, A Sharp had a proposal to make during the dressing-time.

'Let us get up a party this afternoon to run over to Saintsbridge.'

It was the day for one of the weekly half-holidays, and Saintsbridge was a town of about twenty thousand inhabitants, and the next station by rail beyond Winterham.

(To be continued.)

THE DEAD TREE.

IT stood amid a group of stately trees—
Chestnut, and ash, and poplar, all were there;
The aspen shivered in the passing breeze,
The weeping-willow waved her drooping hair.

There was a hum of busy life around,
A fluttering and a motion through the wood,
The very air was musical with sound,
Yet still for evermore, and cold, it stood.

All day the insect sported in the beam,
The stockdove murmured in the leafy shade,
The ousel dived and plunged into the stream,
The dappled fawn roved through the sylvan shade.

All day the little stream went chiming on,
A melody unceasing, sweet, and low;
The wild bird paused to listen in his song,
Or tuned it to its full harmonious flow.

The vagrant wind, to tell its pleasant tale,
Stayed, softly whispering to the listening trees,
And ever and anon from the far vale
Some distant sound came floating on the breeze.

Yet still it stood, so cold, so blank, so drear,
A very monument of silent woe!
It swayed not in the wind, nor could it hear
The world of busy life around, below.

Full oft I gazed on it with sorrowing soul—
It was the symbol of despair to me—
Alas! I had no power to make it whole,
That dreary, desolate, forlorn old tree!



BLACK SPANISH FOWL.

THE principal points of these are, for the cock, a tall, evenly spiked comb of bright red, the wattles being long and pendent, and of the same colour. The whole of the face and deaf ears should be of an opaque white, perfectly clear, without a tinge or a streak of red. The plumage should be a jet and glossy black, the beak and legs of a slate colour. The hens the same; only the comb, being large and

thin, should fold over to one side. They do fairly well in small runs if supplied with fresh vegetables. They are very excellent layers, and the eggs of large size and of a pure white. Being non-sitters, the eggs require putting under another variety of fowl for the purpose of hatching. The chickens are somewhat delicate and do not feather very readily, and require to be kept warm and dry. The flesh is white and delicate in flavour.

H. W.



SOME PESTS OF AFRICAN TRAVEL.

PEOPLE who have the courage to go far into the wilds of Africa must be ready to face discomfort.

Well used as we are to the presence of the ant at home, we may be hardly prepared to find this industrious creature figuring as a frequent pest of African travellers. And yet it is so. In Equatorial Africa the ants are many in kind and hold in the attacks upon man.

Even the minute house-ant is a very plague to the voyager. If he makes his home for a few days in some little hut, with a mud floor and not very sound roof, the legs of the tables and of the rude bedstead must be placed in tins of water. But these defences will be found useless unless they are emptied every day, for myriads of ants will soon fill the tins and give a passage to their comrades with their own dead bodies. To lay down one's hat or helmet, so that it touches the wall or ground, is to prepare the way for an unpleasant surprise when it is next put on. The ants within will then swarm over the wearer's head and face, stinging as they go.

Equally unpleasant neighbours, and very much more destructive, are the white ants. The havoc they make of all wood-work is well known, and it must be a disagreeable surprise, on leaning to rest against some post in the hut, to find it give way with a crash because hollowed out by these ants.

Yet these are by no means so much to be feared as the ferocious driver ants, which are three times as large as the common ant at home. A well-known traveller declared them to be 'the most voracious creatures he ever met, and the dread of every living animal, from the leopard to the smallest insect.' According to this writer, every live obstacle which the driver ants meet in their line of march is eventually overtaken, killed, and eaten.

It is said that the natives on the coast have a legend to the effect, that once upon a time the ants came to King Solomon complaining that the elephants had trodden upon and killed many of their race. The elephants said they had a right to do this as being the stronger, but the ants denied this, and offered to fight them. So the king appointed a time, and a dozen of the strongest elephants came out to fight the ants. At first the latter were crushed by thousands, but presently the elephants rushed headlong to the nearest water, their trunks, ears, eyes, and every tender part was covered with ants, which stung them to madness. Upon this the other elephants declared it was beneath their dignity to fight with such little creatures. But Solomon declared that victory lay with the ants.

The tsetse-fly, which is doubtless the fly often alluded to by the prophet Isaiah, is well known. The fatal effects of its bite upon horses and oxen are a serious hindrance to travelling in many parts of Africa. Mosquitoes and rats, the latter in the neighbourhood of native villages, also greatly annoy those who have to pass through the country.

A. R. B.

THE PURPLE ISLAND.

A Fairy Tale.

CHAPTER I.

'Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a sieve.' LEIR.

ONCE upon a time, in a purple island, far away from England, there dwelt a race of beings called Jumblies.

Now this island, though it was small, was one of the fairest spots in the whole world, and contained many beauties. The people who lived in it were few in number, and so small that no one was taller than four inches.

They were indeed a race of fairies; so small, and so delicately made, that a single buttercup made them an umbrella, and a horse-chestnut hollowed out and covered with gold and emeralds, and drawn by four white caterpillars, made a royal chariot for the king and queen.

In this happy island all the beauties of nature were collected. Every flower and fruit grew naturally. Magnolias and peaches, yellow primroses, purple grapes, strawberries, violets, and blush roses, flourished in their appointed season, and sugar-plums and toffy were as common in Jumblyland as gold and silver is in England, and at certain seasons of the year chocolate drops grew on thistles, while from the fir-trees ran streams of ginger-beer and lemonade. Beautiful trees grew on all sides, and the music of running water and distant cascades ever soothed the mind and ear. The sea and the wind was never rough or violent.

The Jumblies were always happy, and in their old age, if they ever grew cross or weary, a fairy called Contentment supplied them with rose-coloured spectacles, through which everything looked as pretty as it did when they were young. A purple haze hovered over their island home, and the sky was ever blue, except when it was dotted by golden fleecy clouds flitting across the heavens. Here in their fairy island dwelt the Jumblies.

Now there were a king and queen of the Jumblies, and they had two little daughters called Alice and Lily, whom they loved very much, and they all lived happily together. Alice and Lily ran about the island in all the careless innocence of youth, now picking a strawberry, now a rose, or darting off anon to chase a golden butterfly; and they were happy and contented, and had no wish beyond their fairy home, till one day Alice, who was of an adventurous turn of mind, climbed up to the top of a soft white mushroom, by help of a gossamer which stretched from the top of it to the ground, and from it she thought that she could see other islands in the distance, and she came down and told her little sister Lily, who was standing on the ground, quite frightened to see Alice so high up. From that moment they were never happy, and they wandered about longing to leave their happy island, and see what other islands were like—in fact, to see what this world, whose existence they had so lately discovered, looked like, who lived in it, and what sort of beings they were. So day after day they grew thinner and thinner, and more discontented, till at last the King and Queen of the

Jumblies grew quite alarmed about their children's health.

'My dear,' said the King of the Jumblies to the Queen one day, 'I can't think what is the matter with Alice and Lily. They look ill and thin, and have quite lost their appetites. At dinner Alice took no boiled leg of fly, and would not touch a bit of a poached ant's egg. And as for poor Lily, she would not even be tempted by thistledown pie, which she always eats.'

With that the king took off his crown, and was just going to jump on it out of anger, and had put it in the middle of the room, where he could get a good run at it, when the queen said, just as she was going to jump on her crown also, 'Stop, my dear; do not let us be angry; I can tell you why the children are so ill.'

'Be quick then,' said the king, 'or here goes my crown!' preparing to jump on it, for he was very much annoyed.

'Well,' said the queen, 'Alice told me she had climbed up a tall mushroom a few days ago, and from the top of it had seen other islands in the distance. Ever since that day Alice and Lily have been quite unhappy. They care no longer for their home, but they long to go and travel and see the world outside our island.'

'Ah!' said the king, 'no wonder they have not appetites, and won't eat flies' legs. This comes of mushrooms; off with their heads at once.' [We don't know whether he meant the heads of the mushrooms or of the children, but that is of no consequence.]

The king and queen, however, wishing that their children should regain their health, called in Alice and Lily, and asked them just to pick up the crow's that lay on the floor, and at last they said that they should travel and see the world. So the king ordered a beautiful ship to be built for them. It was made out of half a large walnut shell; the sails were made of silk, and the rigging of gossamers, and some oars, constructed of cobwebs, were put in, and some very useful sieves. And in order that everything might be complete, the King of the Jumblies sent an abundant supply of provisions on board, viz., a whole tin of preserved musquitoses' tongues, one raspberry, and a drop of water. And all was now ready.

'But first,' said the king, 'I will send a guardian with Alice and Lily, to show them the way through the world outside our island.'

Now this guardian's name was Florence, a fairy too, like Lily and Alice, and the eldest daughter of the king. She was very tall, for she was nearly two inches high, but the king could trust her. She was very fair and good, and her clothes were made of spun gossamer, stained a lovely colour by the bloom of grapes, and they sparkled in the bright sun. On her brow shone a large diamond called Truth, and round her neck was a necklace of emeralds called Love and home-taught Goodness, while she wore on her finger a ruby ring, whose name was Sisterly Love. In her hand she bore an old book, which the Queen of the Jumblies had given her to be a guide-book to every country. Such and so beautiful was the fairy who was to guide Alice and Lily on their voyage of adventure through the world.

Alice and Lily, too, made their own preparations for

the start. Lily, who was only six years old, took a doll with her; but Alice, who was older and wiser, said, 'I will take with me a penny whistle, for who knows, perhaps there may be some rude people in the world bigger and stronger than I am, and then, if I blow my whistle, they will run away.'

'How wise we are!' said Lily, and she looked as if she thought it.

'No,' said Florence; 'you are two silly little goss-lings.' The ruby ring just happened to pinch her, which made her a little cross. It is wonderful sometimes what little things make great people angry.

CHAPTER II.

'They sailed away in a sieve, they did,
In a sieve they sailed so fast!
And they passed the night in a crockery jar,
And each of them said "How wise we are!"' LEIR.

Soon all the preparations for the voyage were made, and it came to pass on one bright summer morn, when the sun was shining like gold, and the thrushes singing merrily in the rose-trees, while the scent of magnolias and orange blossoms rose like sweet perfume to heaven, that the King of the Jumblies said, 'All is now ready, and you, my dear children, shall start on your journey to see the world.'

All the court came down to the sea-shore on that fair summer morn to see the young princesses set out from Jumblyland, and many a tear did the queen shed over her children as she pressed them again in her arms. Even the King of the Jumblies, though he looked stern, and had that very morning ordered several mushrooms to be cut down, felt his voice falter as he wished his children good-bye and begged Florence to keep her jewels bright. He then went back and jumped upon several crowns, for he was very sad.

And so all three princesses got on board their big ship, and a gentle breeze wafted them out on to the silvery sea. And their happy island home grew less and less in the distance, and at last looked like a small sapphire, then like a purple cloud, and sank out of sight altogether, as the golden sun went down behind the horizon. And the three children in their fairy ship went peacefully on. Alice looked very wise, and Lily talked and laughed, and nursed her doll till she got tired.

But why was it that tears stood in Florence's eyes like crystal drops, and trickled down her fair young cheek? Was she thinking of her happy home and all she had left behind her. Perhaps so. And now the day came to a close, and darkness soon came on, and not a sound now was heard but the ripple of the waves gently kissing the vessel's sides and singing a soft lullaby to send little Lily to sleep. And the stars looked down with kind light from Heaven, while the diamond of Truth on Florence's brow shone far and wide over the calm waters. Alice, too, had fallen asleep; and Lily's doll was standing on its head, so perhaps that was sleeping too, but we don't know. Florence only now remained awake, like a guardian angel over her two sisters, and thought of what the King of the Jumblies had told her. She, too, soon slumbered, and all was now deep peace and quiet, while the vessel glided over the waters of the dark blue sea.

(Concluded in our next.)



The Princesses taking leave of the King and Queen.



Pincher in Pursuit.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 292.)



NOBODY answered at first. Saintsbridge was out of bounds, and boys were not allowed to visit the town except in parties and accompanied by one of the masters.

'You'll come, won't you, Baylis?'

said D Sharp.

'Well—I don't think I shall this afternoon.'

'Pooh! what's the harm? You aren't such a baby as to be afraid because it's out of bounds, are you?'

'No, I'm not a baby.'

'Well,' said A Sharp, 'if it was some fellows I should say they were afraid of old Wilkins finding it out. But I don't think you're the fellow to cut a pleasant excursion because there's a spice of danger about it.'

'I'm not either. I don't mind coming if there are a few fellows willing to join.'

'That's a good fellow! I knew you would be a man. You won't come, Battersley, I suppose?'

'No, thanks; I don't care about it.'

'And why doesn't the good boy care about it?' asked the elder Sharp, imitating Battersley's quiet tones.

'Because I can get plenty of amusement in bounds, without going out-side them for it.'

Tosstop and Freckles likewise declined the expedition; but Green fell in with it at once, as well as a new boy named Bubb, a fat, heavy-eyed lad, who developed great powers of eating, and declared the pastry to be bought at Winterham was a disgrace to any respectable village.

During the morning Battersley found an opportunity of talking to Baylis about the proposed excursion.

'What are you going to Saintsbridge with these fellows for, old boy?'

'Oh, only for the fun of the thing.'

'Well, there's plenty of fun to be had here without breaking bounds to find it, isn't there?'

'No, it's so slow here.'

'I don't believe things are much faster there, unless you get into queer quarters.'

'Well, I'm going anyhow, this time.'

'All right; only don't let those fellows frighten you into it again, by saying you're afraid.'

'They didn't frighten me. I suppose I can go if I like.'

Just then they were separated, and Herbert Battersley went on to his place with a feeling that in trying to do a friend good he had managed it so clumsily that more harm would come of it.

Baylis, on his part, was certainly irritated, and at nothing so much as the suggestion that he had been frightened into the excursion. Frightened! Why that was just the very thing he had been resolved to show he was not, by going with the party to Saintsbridge. And yet in his heart of hearts he felt that Battersley's words were not without foundation.

Now the elder Sharp had seen the conversation between the two friends, and heard just enough to tell him what it was about.

After morning school he went to Baylis.

'You're not coming to Saintsbridge after all, are you?'

'Yes, I am. What made you think I wasn't?'

'Oh, nothing, only I saw that fellow Battersley talking to you between classes.'

'Oh, yes, he was talking about it.'

'Well, I'm glad you made up your mind to strike out a line for yourself. He won't be able to brag so much now.'

'Brag? what do you mean?'

'Why, don't you know that he's always letting the fellows know what a good friend he has been to you, and how you think a lot of his advice?'

'No; does he?'

'Rather,' said Sharp. 'It was not true. But then, why should Sharp say so if it was not?'

'All right,' said Baylis; 'I'll see about that.'

'I would if I were you. It's too much of a good thing by a long way.'

Having thus 'settled Battersley's hash there,' as Master Sharp expressed it, he left Baylis to his reflections.

They were not of a pleasant nature. Had not Battersley been doing that morning the very thing which showed Sharp was right? He would certainly let him see that he was old enough and had sense enough to get on by himself, without his interference. He did not come to this conclusion without some little difficulty, for his stupid memory would persist in bringing up recollections of the sprained ankle, and the mistake that helped to correct. But his mind being once made up, it was easy to find a dozen reasons for keeping to his resolution of holding Battersley and his advice at arm's length in future.

The afternoon came, a fine May day, with a glorious sunshine that sent most of the boys headlong to the cricket-field. Baylis felt a pang at leaving its attractions behind, but after all there was something quite superior in going off, like a very big fellow indeed, to spend the afternoon in a town like Saintsbridge.

The four lads got safely to Winterham without any mishap, but nearly lost their train notwithstanding. Bubb would not be persuaded to keep all his money for Saintsbridge, and dashed into the despised Winterham confectioner's intent on feeding.

Green, who had adorned his person with a new jacket and a grand tie for the occasion, met with a misfortune which further complicated matters. Whilst rolling his huge eyes about upon every object but the path before him, a fine Newfoundland dog came running along in pursuit of his master, got mixed up with Green's legs, and brought his body to the ground in a very undignified manner. There had been some rain on the previous day, and the pavement was muddy. It was in consequence necessary that Green should undergo a scraping by the pocket-knives of the assembled company before he could go farther.

This accident was the more severely felt because their way led them past the shop in which the butcher's boy, whose challenge to mortal combat

Bruin Grant was known to have declined, was to be found.

Green indulged a hope that he might be out upon an errand when they passed. But he was doomed to disappointment. Their enemy was found seated on a large chopping-block near the door, playing with a bandy-legged and very ferocious-looking bull-dog.

He at once dismounted from his seat on the St. Egbert's boys passing, and came out to the door in order to pay them some compliments.

'I say, who's been a-rolling ye in the mud?' he asked, pointing in a derisive way at Green's freshly scraped coat and trousers.

The whole party turned around, and the elder Sharp took upon himself to reply.

'Yah! go along, butcher's boy!'

He soon repented of his rashness.

'At 'em, Pincher!' cried the young butcher; and that dreadful dog leaped out of the shop, as though to make a slight repast off a plump St. Egbert's boy was the dearest wish of his life. And, indeed, from a dog's point of view, both Green and Bubb would have supplied toothsome morsels.

No sooner did the five see this enemy dash out in their direction than all took to their heels, and ran at the top of their speed. This to Pincher's mind greatly increased the fun of the occasion, for his four legs more than enabled him to keep up with them. Apparently, too, he knew which the chief offenders were, for he confined his attentions to Green and the elder Sharp. Around this pair he circled in turn, now dashing at their heels, then leaping in their faces as though he would fasten upon their noses and pin them in scientific fashion, and all the time barking with a ferocity which seemed to curdle the blood in their veins. Whilst this chase was going on they could hear the young butcher laughing at the top of his voice, and frequently bidding them to 'put on steam,' and not to mind old Pincher, as it was 'only his fun.'

Very thankful were they when a loud bass voice was heard calling Pincher back, and they would perhaps have felt some relief to their wounded feelings had they known the cause of this release. The master-butcher coming home from the other end of the street, saw his apprentice dancing about in high glee in the middle of the road, whilst his dog pursued the lads in the distance. Not thinking such habits likely to benefit his trade, he brought the young man to a sense of his duty by a couple of sound cuffs, which were accompanied by the question as to whether that was what he called minding the shop whilst his master was out?

But the five adventurers knew nothing of this, and went on to the station in various moods, but all very much out of temper at the unpleasant drawbacks to what was to have been such a great and much-to-be-talked-of afternoon.

CHAPTER IX.

It is a curious but often noticed fact, that when people are in a bad temper vexation usually follows vexation. So it was with the five adventurers on that remarkable day. As they neared the station they could see that their train was already in. Not

wishing to have their time in Saintsbridge shortened they all broke once more into a run. They hurried along at an excellent pace, but in vain. Just as they reached the station the engine gave one or two convulsive puffs, and then moved off with the train of carriages behind.

Master Sharp's anger knew no bounds.

'Here, porter,' he said to an official who was lazily watching the departing train; 'just stir your stumps, and find out for me when the next train for Saintsbridge is due. You're never satisfied unless you get some people left behind.'

'Then find it yourself,' said the porter.

An anxious examination by the entire company of all the time-tables in the station of course followed. From one of these it was seen that the next train for Saintsbridge, stopping at Winterham, would arrive in exactly an hour's time. Their faces grew very long at this discovery. They would not reach their destination till a quarter to four, and the only train by which they could return in time for tea left again at half-past. It would not be possible to see or do very much at Saintsbridge in that time.

How to pass the hour away was no easy matter. Winterham consisted of only one long street, and in that street dwelt a butcher's boy and his bull-dog. Nobody, therefore, suggested that they should take a little walk, and look into the shop-windows. So they fell a-talking instead; A Sharp commencing.

'If we had only caught that train it would have been all right. It's all through your tumbling down, Green.'

'All through me? Well, I call that a good one! If it had not been for me we should have been ever so much later.'

'Stuff! How do you make that out?'

'Why, if I hadn't fallen down the butcher's boy wouldn't have yelled after me, and then the dog wouldn't have made us cut along so fast to the station.'

There was a laugh at this. Then Baylis, who had been silent most of the time, put in a word.

'I propose we go back. What's the good of spending three quarters of an hour in this place?'

'Ah, yes,' said the elder Sharp with a sneer; 'let us go back of course, and tell Battersley and the rest that we're sorry we came, and that we won't do it again.'

'I propose we go on,' said Bubb. 'Turtle says there are some jolly pastry-cooks in Saintsbridge, and I intend to tuck in.'

'Quite right, old boy; let us show we have some pluck in us, any way. Now what do you all say to a smoke?'

Sharp accompanied this suggestion with the display of a box of cigarettes, from which he selected one, lit it, and began to smoke with the air of an old stager.

His brother at once followed his example, saying as he did so, 'Don't you fellows take one if you're afraid it will make you sick. It does sometimes turn up people who are not used to these things.'

'And perhaps Wilkins will smell us out,' added his brother; 'so I wouldn't join in if I was afraid of that.'

'Oh!' replied Green, 'I'm not such a muff as you



Bayham Abbey.

take me for. It isn't the first time I have smoked; oh, no.' With this he, too, took a cigarette. Bubb at once did the same, and Baylis, not wishing to be an exception, followed suit.

'Now I call this jolly,' said the elder Sharp, leaning back on the platform-seat with his hands in his pockets, and looking up towards the sky.

'Prime,' said Green; 'and ever so much better than cutting about in the sun on the cricket-field.'

Baylis did not agree with this opinion, but it was not worth discussing.

(To be continued.)

BAYHAM ABBEY.

FROM the beauty of its situation, this Abbey in Kent was formerly known as Beaulieu. It was founded A.D. 1200, and the two houses of Ottenham and Deptford were merged in it. Edward I. lodged here A.D. 1299, Edward II. in 1324, and Richard of Chichester for some time. When the house was dissolved the monks were so much beloved that the neighbouring peasants, disguised in vizors, are said to have led them back, restored them, and promised to succour them whenever they should ring their bell. The ruins are of considerable extent and solidity.



Good Coffee.

GOOD COFFEE.

THE art of making coffee seems to be almost lost. The reason is this, the coffee is neither bought properly nor properly prepared for table. Here is a receipt which was in common use with our grandmothers, and will never fail to produce good coffee. First, find a housekeeper who has been so brought up that she knows good raw coffee when she sees it; next, let her buy good coffee—not send an order to the grocer for it, but personally examine and buy the coffee; next, let the coffee be roasted as often as once a-week under the personal superintendence of this housekeeper. She need not sit upon the roaster, but she certainly should personally see that whoever roasts it does it gradually, and not too little, to do which she should know the colour and perfume of rightly roasted coffee. The roasted beans should then be put into glass jars, tightly stoppered. Then about fifteen minutes, and not longer, before the coffee is needed, the beans should be taken out and

ground, and the grist go directly from the mill into the coffee-pot, otherwise some of the much-prized aroma and flavour will pass off. Thus made, in almost any sort of pot, coffee will surely be good—as good as it used to be when our mothers made it, for this was their receipt. As to buying ground coffee, or even roasted coffee in the bean which lies open to the air, or even grinding up a lot of coffee at home and keeping it in a big box, which may be open or may be shut, and then expecting good coffee, why, fair ladies, you might as well look for sunbeams from cucumbers.

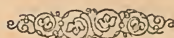
THE STORY OF EUSTACHE DE ST. PIERRE.

IN the year 1347, during the course of the hundred years' war, the English king, Edward III., besieged the town of Calais, on the northern coast of France. The sturdy citizens held out nobly for a year, but at the end of that time, disappointed of the

help they had expected from the French king, and reduced by famine to despair, they sent out one of their nobles to hear what terms Edward offered them. Standing on the wall of the city, John of Vienne awaited anxiously the answer to his message, while in the streets and market-place great crowds gathered, and with pale faces and bated breath discussed eagerly the issue of the negotiations. Famine-stricken women tried to arouse their dying children with the promise of bread ere long, and gaunt, hungry men, dragged themselves into the streets to await the return of John of Vienne. The tolling of the great bell was the signal for all to rush together, and amid breathless silence Edward's answer was made known. On condition that six of the burghers of Calais should be delivered up to him that he might work his will upon them, the king promised pardon to the rest of the inhabitants of Calais, and on that condition alone. A cry of bitter disappointment and despair broke from the starving throng. Where were the six men in all Calais who would deliver themselves up to King Edward? Was he not known to be full of fierce anger against them, for had not many of his soldiers lost their lives in the siege of their city? No: the terms were too hard, and the citizens were filled with despair. Then stepped forth the richest burgher in all Calais, Eustache de St. Pierre, and in calm and noble words offered himself as one of the six devoted men. Fired by his noble example another came forward, then another, and another until the number was made up, and the gallant little band left the city amid the tears and prayers, and blessings of their fellow-townsmen.

Clad in their shirts, with halters round their necks, they came to the camp of King Edward, and delivered up to him the keys of the city. 'Gentle King' (Eustache de St. Pierre was the speaker) 'here be we six who have been of the old bourgeoisie of Calais; we bring you the keys of our city, and set ourselves in such wise as you see purely at your will, to save the remnant of the people that has suffered much pain. So may you have pity on us for your high nobleness' sake.'

But the monarch was filled with fury, and in spite of the intercessions of the courtiers who stood round him, many of whom were moved to tears, he commanded that Eustache and his five companions should be put to death. Then came his queen, Philippa of Hainault, and cast herself down at his feet, and clasping his knees, while the tears fell down her cheeks, she implored him to spare his noble prisoners. The stern king gazed long in silence on his suppliant wife, and then, saying, 'Lady, I would rather you had been elsewhere; you pray so tenderly, that I dare not refuse you; and though I do it against my will, nevertheless take them, I give them you,' he raised her gently from the ground, and delivered to her care the six citizens. Ah! what a welcome there was for them, when clothed and fed by the queen, they returned to their city in honour and joy! Never has the name of Eustache de St. Pierre ceased to be revered in the town of Calais; and the memory of Philippa of Hainault lives in the story of her deed and tender pity.



THE PURPLE ISLAND.

(Concluded from page 295.)

CHAPTER III.

'And all night long they sailed away,
And when the sun went down
They whistled and warbled a moony song
To the echoing sound of a coppersy gong,
In the shade of the mountains brown;
Oh, Jimballoo, how happy we are!'

LEIL.

SOON the night passed away, and morning came again. Up rose the sun, gilding with his beams the sea far and wide till it looked like a sheet of gold. And Florence, Lily, and Alice, soon woke up, and each thought for a moment that they were in Jumblyland, but they soon found out their mistake. As they looked out from their walnut ship they saw before their eyes a beautiful island. The shores were covered with roses and violets, and lovely birds of green and gold plumage flitted about, flashing in the morning sun, while far above their heads the larks sang a song of welcome as the keel of their vessel glided up the green shore. As there was a very heavy dew that morning, the walnut ship went sailing merrily over the grass, and Florence, Alice, and Lily, though they longed to do so, were afraid to get out, lest they should be drowned, for they could not swim. However, the sun as it got higher in the heavens, soon dried up the dew, and then the three little adventurers jumped out of their ship.

And wise Alice said, 'Let us hide our ship with boughs, so that we may use it again, if ever we come back.'

'Quite right,' said Florence; and she was also heard to whisper that things generally were awfully jolly.

'I,' said Lily, 'will put my doll in the ship,' as if she was proposing a great treat for the doll; 'and I have made a hole for the sawdust to come out, so that if she is hungry she can eat it.'

'That is very kind of you,' said Florence; for though she saw that it was very foolish of little Lily, she did not laugh for fear of offending such a little one: and the ruby ring of Sisterly Love shone brighter than ever on Florence's finger.

'Now,' said Lily, 'we had better breakfast.' So they all sat down, and Florence made some tea in a harebell, and poured it out in cups of bluebell. Alice climbed up a marsh marigold to get some butter, and they had plenty of salt, for they had gathered it from the sea in their useful sieves. So they made a capital meal. And then they set out on their journey to see the world.

The first thing they came to after leaving the flowery meadow where they had breakfasted was a huge, black forest, which rose like a wall before them. And this they had to penetrate, for the world was on the other side. Florence went first, and the diamond on her brow shone so brightly that she was able to see a narrow path through the wood, and pointed it out to Alice and Lily; and all three entered upon it. Now, inside this wood were many paths, some of which led to sweet, grassy glades, bright with flowers, and from others came the sound of music and running water, song and dance, inviting Florence to turn down and just go for a moment to see it all. But as Florence was going down one path, which ended in a glade, more lovely in colour than any-

thing she had ever seen, she happened for a moment to look at her jewels, which had suddenly lost all their lustre, so she turned away to the narrow path again; and as she looked back again, lo! the bright glade had lost all its beauty, and snakes and hideous reptiles were crawling among the faded flowers. So she thought of the Queen of the Jumblies, and what she would have done, and went on bravely through the narrow path, and again her jewels shone bright as stars.

Lily was now getting a little tired, and even Alice was showing signs of fatigue; but Florence led Lily by the hand that wore the ruby ring.

'Mother,' said Lily, 'I wish I was twenty, and had a real watch.'

'My dear,' said Florence, 'mother is not here. You should not have left Jumblyland.'

'How wise we——' Alice was just going to utter a general statement about her own wisdom, when, lo! a sudden gleam of light burst upon them; they had at last pierced the great, black forest, and now on a plain before them lay the long-wished-for world.

They had taken the right path, and all looked so pleased that it would have done the Queen of the Jumblies good to have seen them all at that moment. Perhaps Florence was thinking of her; perhaps she knew by instinct how often parents pray for their absent children, as she sat in deep thought, gazing at Alice and Lily, and at the mighty world before them.

After all, when the first delight, which they all felt at getting out of the wood, had passed away, this world which they had so longed to see, was very like Jumblyland. And they soon came to some inhabitants, and found them very like themselves, and not a bit bigger.

'Dear me,' said Alice, 'the idea of leaving Jumblyland to see people like ourselves!'

'What on earth is the good of my penny whistle?' Florence thought, but said nothing; perhaps she thought to herself, 'I see that the wisdom I learnt at home, and my jewels, are as useful here as they are in Jumblyland.' At any rate, she said nothing.

Lily said a good deal, and, perhaps, thought very little; but at any rate, she assumed a quiet air of superiority over an inhabitant who addressed her, which did her credit, and was an honour to Jumblyland.

And what was the first thing they saw in this world they had so longed to enter? Why, a pastry-cook's shop. So, of course, they all went in; and Lily and Alice had fixed their mind on a particular sweet, namely, half a quarter of an apple pip, crusted with sugar, when it struck them all that there was something strange about the people behind the counter who were serving the customers. What was it? Florence, Alice, and Lily all looked again. They had no heads, and their eyes were in the middle of their bodies. Even Lily's appetite vanished at this strange sight; and Florence was seen to hesitate for a moment before she answered Alice's eager inquiry as to what this strange sight meant.

But the diamond of Truth shone as bright as ever on Florence's brow as she answered,—

'My dear sisters, the indulgence of appetite is the first temptation which we have to conquer in this new world. You see those strange people behind

the counter. They are little boys who in early life over-ate themselves at this pastrycook's shop. As they seemed to have no brains in their heads, their heads were cut off, and their eyes were put in the middle of their bodies, as a punishment; and they now resemble snails, whose brains are in their stomachs. But let us take warning by such an example, and eat a plain halfpenny bun.'

'How wise we are!' said Lily, inwardly longing to eat half the shop.

Alice thought the same, but bravely munched her halfpenny bun, and looked as if she hated sugar-plums.

'Why don't you eat?' said the boy with eyes in his waistcoat, to Florence.

'We don't do those things in Jumblyland,' said Florence, with some dignity; and the three little adventurers marched on in single file to the tune of that well-known song, 'We don't care a button, we don't care a fig.'

* * * * *

'Bo-o-o! Jimballoo! Lingari!! Look at them!' said two horrid boys, as they rushed into the boudoir of a country house one wet afternoon, about three o'clock. 'We knew how it would be. Florence, Lily, and Alice all ate roly-poly for dinner, and are all fast asleep.'

And so the three little girls woke up, and found out that it had all been a dream. Jumblyland had never existed!

Lily thought no more about it; but Alice and Florence did, and settled among themselves that it was an allegory. And so they all went to their mother, to tell her of the wonderful things that all three had dreamt of, and to find out what it all meant.

'Mother,' said Lily, 'we have had an alligator, and Florence says it is a moral.'

'Hush, Lily!' said wise Alice. 'Mother, we have been out in a walnut, and seen——'

But here Florence quietly interposed, and told mother the dream, and asked what it all meant.

'What does it mean?' said mother, kissing each of them. 'Why, the moral of your dream is this: the days of your childhood are the happiest you will ever have, but they cannot last for ever. The time will come when you will wish to go out into the world. Then, if you keep in your minds, and act upon the lessons of love and charity you have learnt at home, and keep unspotted the pure and simple faith that your mother has taught you, you will find the forests of the world easy to thread, and will yourselves be always happy.'

'Dear me!' said Lily; 'and shall I then have a real watch, and——'

The rest of Lily's wish was lost in merry laughter, and I, who was a robin redbreast outside the window, heard it all, and thought to myself, 'Oh, Jimballoo! how happy they are!' And the echoing sound of a coppery gong, which warned the children that the autumn day was at a close, and the dinner-hour near, seemed to be humming in my ears, as I flew away to roost, the following wise words:—

'Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a sieve.'

ELWARD.



The Girls waking from their Dream.



"Boxer" watching the starved Dog scratching up the Bones.



A TRUE STORY.

YOUNG lady who lived at a country-house surrounded by grounds had a favourite bull-dog called 'Boxer.' This dog had one fault, which was that of fighting with every dog he met. Yet he had a generous disposition, as the following instance will show:—

One day, after having eaten his dinner, he was observed to carry the remainder to a part of the grounds called the 'Wilderness,' where he buried it. Then he went to a hedge and gave three distinct barks; a poor, ill-used, starved dog soon appeared. The two then went to the spot where the dinner was buried; Boxer, wagging his tail, showed with his paw where he had buried the bones. Immediately the starved dog scratched up the earth and voraciously began to devour the bones.

This performance was daily repeated for three weeks, when the young lady and Boxer left the country; so the poor dog lost his daily dinner and kind friend.

S. H.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 300.)

THEY smoked in silence for some time, and then Green demanded another cigarette, for he had been anxious to show his great enjoyment of this treat by producing great clouds of smoke. Sharp's little box again came out, and Green's wants were soon supplied.

After more puffing he was seen to become very much quieter.

'Why, your cigarette's out, Green!' said the younger Sharp; 'let me give you a light.'

'No—no—thanks; I—I think it's all right,' replied Green, and then he replaced the cigarette between lips that were already getting rather white.

A brief silence ensued. Then Green spoke again.

'I fancy there's something curious about this tobacco.'

'Why, what's the matter with it?'

'It—it tastes queer.'

'So it does! so it does!' repeated Bubb, who also began to look uneasy.

'My impression is that it's you fellows who are queer,' said A Sharp.

'It was that horrid hash at dinner, I know it was,' replied Green.

'Not the cigarettes?' asked the younger Sharp.

'No,' said Green, 'rather not. Why, I've —' But he did not finish the sentence. His feelings overcame him at this point, and he rushed out of the little station to a field by the side of the road. He was followed at once by Bubb; and presently Baylis, without saying a word, went in the same direction.

This sudden flight seemed to give great amuse-

ment to the two Sharps, who presently came out to see what was going on. The three novices were then found lying on the grass in various attitudes, whilst Green groaned aloud in his agony, and was heard wishing the two Sharps at Jericho, or any other equally distant spot. Leaning calmly over the railings, the two young spectators consoled the sick folk with the promise that they should not have any cigarettes another time, and that, if they had only known they were so weak, they would not have asked them then.

To this Bubb replied in threatening tones, which soon melted into words of regret at missing so good a chance of testing the pastry-cook's skill at Saintsbridge.

Just as the elder Sharp was making what he considered a suitable reply, the train for Saintsbridge was heard coming in. With a cheerful 'Good-bye, old fellows; hope you'll be all right by the time we come back,' they went into the station, took their tickets, and were soon on the road to Saintsbridge.

When they went off the three sick men were not in a condition to talk much amongst themselves about their misfortune. But when their agonies were a little abated they sat up on the grass and discussed their future course of action.

'Let us go back at once,' said Baylis, who was really ashamed of the whole affair.

'No, no,' said Green; 'if we go back without them all the fellows will want to know what has been up, and we shall get jolly well laughed at. Stay till they come back, that's the best way.'

'Right you are, Green,' said Bubb; 'I don't feel inclined to move just now.'

Baylis yielded to this argument, not only because he did not want to be laughed at himself, but also because he saw that if he went back alone it must lead to the whole story coming out.

So they sat there until the sickness was gone, and then went back to the station, where they weighed one another in the absence of the porter, and performed various feats of strength with the weights to their own admiration and pleasure.

In due course the train from Saintsbridge arrived, and a few passengers got out. But the Sharps were not amongst them.

'Whew! Here's a pretty go!' cried Baylis.

'A regular sell!' said the others.

'What's to be done now?'

'Wait,' said Green. 'We'll show them they can't sell us.'

Having waited so long, it indeed seemed reasonable to wait another half-an-hour for the next up-train. But this second interval would seem much longer than the first. It was certain now that they would lose their tea, and equally certain that an inquiry would be made into the way in which their afternoon had been spent. Green and Bubb did not seem to consider this any difficulty, but occupied their minds in composing a plausible tale to account for their absence. But the better feelings of Baylis rose against the thought of telling a lie, and before they had spent ten minutes of that half-an-hour he resolved on doing something to escape this shameful act.

'Look here, you fellows! if we start back home

now, we shall get there in time to save our tea; and you won't have to tell those jolly long tales, any way.'

'Nonsense! let us stay till those fellows come back; it won't be long, and then we can all go in together.'

'Long enough to get into a jolly row.'

'But what will they say if we go back like this?'

'Say? That depends on what you tell them.'

'Ah!' said Green and Bubb together, seeing here some opening for the use of their imaginations.

'Are you coming?' said Baylis, buttoning up his jacket. The other two looked at each other and at him. Then all three stepped out into the road.

To reach the school by tea-time was even then no easy matter. They had to run for it the whole of the two miles, and at last, after several rests, reached their destination tired and panting, but with several minutes to spare.

As they crossed the playground Battersley met them. He was just coming from the cricket-field with several other lads, some of whom Baylis knew to be in the St. Egbert's Eleven. To be a member of that noble body was one of his desires, and he regretted having thrown away such an afternoon for practice by spending it in the way they had at Winterham. There would be three or four vacancies, so everybody said, and he had made up his mind to try for a place.

Battersley came up as usual with a friendly greeting. In the morning Baylis had made up his mind to keep his old friend at arm's length, but now he was too much disgusted at the afternoon's failure to do more than return a sulky answer. But the other was not to be put off.

'Had a jolly time of it?' he asked.

'Pretty well,' said Baylis; and then, to prevent the other from asking any awkward questions, he said, 'And what have you been up to?'

'Oh, I've had a jolly practice. Dunstan wanted some fellows to make up sides, so I went in for it, and got on capitally. He is going to give me a tip or two about bowling.'

'You bowl?'

'Yes; why not?'

'Oh, no reason, of course. Only I didn't know you played much.'

'It isn't much, you know. Only my father, who was a good cricketer once, taught me how to bowl slowly.'

'Perhaps you'll get a place in the eleven,' said Baylis, with something like a sneer, but without thinking such a thing in any way possible or probable.

'I only wish I could,' said Battersley. 'Dunstan thought perhaps I might if I stuck hard at the bowling; only I'm such a wretched bat.'

Baylis opened his eyes at this news, but made no reply. He felt that a good strong fit of bad temper was fast coming over him. But since Battersley and he had been friends such fits had always been fought against, and even now, when provoked at his friend, he could not go on with the answers which rose to his lips. So they went upstairs in silence.

At tea Baylis was very silent, but Green quite made up for any lack of words on his part. Being

asked by one boy how they got on, he at once launched out into a glowing description of the day's enjoyments. He had not gone far when Tosstop put in a question quietly.

'How about the butcher and his dog?'

Green's countenance fell. But he rose to the occasion, and asked with a surprised air, 'What butcher?'

'The one who set his bull-dog at you, and sent you all flying down the street.'

'What bull-dog? Who flying?' asked a dozen voices. Whereupon the whole story came out, to the great confusion of the three adventurers then present. It appeared that one of the sixth was making some purchases in a shop near at hand when the affair took place, and thus saw its circumstances, which, as he considered they had disgraced the school, he at once made public on getting back.

Here was a miserable ending to this much-vaunted excursion! By bedtime every little boy in the school would have heard of their flight, and would not fail to remind them of it. Perhaps, too, the smoking affair would come out sooner or later, and then the cup of their disgrace would be full. Green and Bubb did not feel the matter very deeply. They were not of the natures upon which such events ever will make much impression. But with Baylis it was otherwise. He felt disgraced in the eyes of his most valued friends, who would now, he thought, place him on the same level with Green and Bubb. And yet this feeling did not make him the more disposed to renew his old friendship with Battersley. On the contrary, he began in a certain way to dislike him; and for no other reason than that he remained upright and of good repute, whilst he himself had fallen in the estimation of those he most wished to have the good opinion of. He was, in fact, just on the road to the state of so many lads who fail to get a good character from their schoolmaster; he was beginning to feel indifferent to what people thought about him, and was ready to do and dare acts that in happier moments he would have spurned as beneath him.

When tea was over and the Sharps did not appear, many guesses were made as to the cause of their absence. Their three companions were asked what had become of them, but all kept a judicious silence on that point. It was not until the evening was well advanced that they appeared, so that Baylis and his companions had good reason to be glad that they did not wait for any more of the Saintsbridge trains.

Seeing the three together the two Sharps came up to them just before supper-time, and in a jaunty manner asked how they had got on. Baylis replied. Then Green spoke.

'I say, won't you two get it for being out after hours!'

'Not a bit of it!' answered Sharp senior.

'Why not?' asked the three.

'Because we had permission from Swanage to visit an old aunt who lives in the town, and who wrote for us to come.'

Their three companions looked rather foolish at this, and Baylis, turning on his heel, left the party at once.

(To be continued.)



HOME FROM THE WARS.

A FEW steps farther on!
 From over land and sea
 The soldier, after battles fought,
 Has journeyed eagerly.
 Oh! for the joy of home,
 For loving looks at last,
 For welcomes and for praises sweet—
 Worth all the dangers past!

A few steps farther on—
 Only across the moor,
 And soon his hand will press the latch
 Of the old cottage door.
 A few steps farther on—
 Only a ruined wall,
 Only some flowers growing waste,
 Silence—and that is all.

A few steps farther yet!
 Good soldier, journey on;
 A few steps on the heavenly road,
 Then the search is done.
 Then for the welcomes dear,
 Then for the praises sweet,
 Unfading flowers, eternal bowers,
 Where none do part who meet!

E. M. A. F. S.

AN INDIAN CHIEF.

AS breakfast was being prepared a visitor appeared, an old, stately-looking Indian—a chief as we were informed. He came with only one attendant; but two or three canoes made their appearance about the same time, with other Indians, squaws and papooses, who squatted in groups on the banks at respectful distances. The old Indian came up with a 'B'jou,



An Indian Chief.

b'jou,' shook hands all round, and then drawing himself up, knife in one hand, big pipe in the other, the emblem of war and peace, he began a long harangue. We didn't understand a word; but one of the men roughly interpreted, and the speaker's gestures were so expressive that the drift of his meaning could be easily followed. Pointing with outstretched arms, north, south, east, and west, he told us that all the land had been his people's, and that he now, in their name, asked for some return for our passage through it. The aim of all the eloquence was simply a breakfast; but the bearing and speech were those of a born orator. He had good straight features, a large Roman nose, square chin, and, as he stood over six feet in his moccasins, his presence was most commanding. One great secret of impressive gesticulation—the free play of the arm from the shoulder, instead of the cramped motion from the elbow—he certainly knew. It was astonishing with what

dignity and force long, rolling musical sentences poured from the lips of one who would be carelessly classed by most people as a savage, to whose views no regard should be paid. When ended, he took a seat on a hillock with the dignity natural to every real Indian, and began to smoke in perfect silence. He had said his say, and it was our turn now. Without answering his speech, which we could only have done in a style far inferior to his, the chief proposed that he should have some breakfast. To show due respect to so great an O-ghe-mah, a newspaper was spread before him as a table-cloth and a plate of fried pork placed on it, with a huge 'slap-jack,' or thick pancake, made of flour and fat, one sixth of which was as much as any white man's stomach could digest. A large pannikin of tea, a beverage of which the Indians are very fond, was also brought, and by signs he was invited to 'fall to.' For some moments he made no movement, either from offended pride or

expectation that we would join him, or, more likely, only to show a gentlemanly indifference to the food; but the fat pork and fragrant tea were irresistible. Many a great man's dignity has been overcome by less. After he had eaten about half, he summoned his attendant to sit beside him and eat; and to him too a pannikin of tea was brought. We then told the old man that we had heard his words; that we were travellers carrying only enough food for ourselves, but that we would bring his views to the notice of the Government, and that his tribe would certainly receive justice, as it was the desire of our great mother the Queen that all her children—red as well as white—should be well cared for. He at once assented, though whether he would have done so with equal blandness if we had not given him his breakfast is questionable.—*From Ocean to Ocean.*

WHALES.

IN these days, when the old sailing-ships are fast being replaced by ocean steamers, many of the most interesting sights formerly met with at sea are now seldom witnessed. Of course, we do not for a moment mean to imply that the steamers are not a great improvement in nearly all respects over their predecessors, being more punctual, quicker, and, perhaps, safer; but the numerous inhabitants of the deep have not become quite accustomed to the smoke and clatter of the screw and paddles; and fish of all sorts that race round a sailing-vessel, keeping her company for days together, rarely approach a steamer close enough for the people on board to study their habits. Whales especially seem to be very shy of steamships, and either plunge down deep into the ocean, or rush off over the waves at a great pace from them, for, though enormous animals (which they are more than fish), they are timid creatures. From the sailing ship you can examine them pretty well, and their gambols are most amusing and interesting. Sometimes they will come rushing towards the vessel with such speed as to make one think they intend to upset her, and when close to, they plunge head-foremost under her bottom, coming up on the other side with a snort from their nostrils that is heard for a long distance around. At another time they will race alongside for some miles, and seem delighted to show you with what ease they can beat the fastest vessel. Now and again, when accompanied by their young, they will play about in front of the ship, as if teaching the calves how to avoid being run over; and it is great fun to see these latter rolling over the mother, and knocking up against one another. But by far the funniest sight is to see a flock (called by whalers a *school*) of whales, having a game among themselves. They play what looks very like 'follow my leader,' and very closely follow the antics of a young bull, who apparently sets them the example. The game generally ends by the creatures first rushing deep down in the water, and then returning to the surface with such velocity as to jump clean out of the sea. Fancy seeing a fish-like animal forty feet long—aye, a dozen of them at a time—in mid air! Whalers call this 'breaching.'

O. W.

THAT CLEVER BOY!

I ASSURE you, Mrs. Tooker, he's a most clever lad, and one as *must* make his way in the world; so you see if my words don't come true.'

It was Mrs. Umpleby who spoke. In a short conversation with her neighbour, Mrs. Tooker, over the low railings which separated their respective gardens, the latter had ventured to express a hope that Michael Umpleby was doing well at school.

Now Mrs. Umpleby was jealous of her boy's reputation, and it really seemed to her that this question covered an existing doubt as to the progress of Michael. Hence her reply.

That reply only feebly expressed her own belief. She felt quite certain that her Mike was a lad of uncommon intelligence, and Michael was, unhappily, of quite the same opinion.

At present he was at school, but he was never in good odour with his master. What was the matter? Why, when Mike ought to have been learning his lessons, or doing his sums, he was often found very busy at carving a wooden boat, or some part of a miniature windmill. The master complained, but Mrs. Umpleby was ready with her reply.

'You see, sir, the boy is that clever he can't be tied down like other lads to their books. There's this natural love of carpentering in him, and it must come out.'

'Then make him a carpenter.'

The advice was good, and in due time Mike went to Mr. Gaukroger, the village carpenter, for a month's trial before being apprenticed.

'Now,' thought Mrs. Umpleby, 'the lad will be happy, and we shall see what a fine man he will make at his trade. It wouldn't surprise me a bit if he turned out a wonderful carver some day.'

Mike was at first very proud of his tools. But towards the end of his first week, at a time when he should have been diligently planing a plank, his master found him reading a cheap book on chemistry.

About this time, too, Mrs. Umpleby was alarmed by several explosions in her back-yard, and heard from Mike's little brother that these were the results of her eldest son's 'chemical 'speriments.'

Chemistry now became the order of the day, and Mike's delight in carving seemed quite to vanish. Nor did he now take any interest in his daily work. All his thoughts were given not to his proper tasks, but to the marvellous feats he would perform in the yard when he got home in the evening.

The natural results followed. Mike did more harm than good in the workshop. His mind being quite taken up with other thoughts, he sawed a good many planks exactly in the places he ought not to have done, left tools where he could never find them, and got himself into trouble with everybody.

These facts were new to Mrs. Umpleby, who was much surprised when Mr. Gaukroger came to her at the end of the month, to say that he would rather not have Mike on any terms.

But she consoled herself with the thought that her boy was too good to be only a carpenter, and was sure to make a great chemist. Michael himself, on being consulted, thought the same, and told his mother that Mr. Bowden, the chemist, wanted a boy.

'That's just the thing for you,' said Mrs. Umpleby; and she at once went off to the chemist.

The next week saw Mike in his new place.

'Now,' said Mrs. Tooker to herself, 'Mike will be going on beautifully; he will be mixed up with chemical things all day long, and can play with them at night as much as he likes.'

But the curious thing was that Mike never seemed to care about chemistry now. There were no more experiments in the back-yard, nor did he ever talk at table about the wonders he was going to perform. How was this? Well, the truth is, that Mike had not been two days at the chemist's when he began to have a great fondness for painting. All his pocket-money was now spent in paint and brushes, and the long-suffering back-yard soon began to show signs of the new fever. The little fowl-house was painted in a very original way in streaks of light and dark blue, and the gate found itself one day compelled to receive a coat of green.

The result was so far satisfactory that a neighbour expressed to Mrs. Umpleby a belief that she ought to be very thankful for having such a clever son—an opinion with which Mike's mother still quite agreed.

His new master did not seem to be of the same mind. He soon came to Mrs. Umpleby, complaining that her son had been late three mornings in succession. She expressed great sorrow at the news, and promised to speak to Mike about it.

But no sooner was Mr. Bowden gone, than Mrs. Umpleby remembered that it was on these particular mornings that Mike had been busy in painting the fowl-house. That was why he had been so late, poor boy! And so her anger was soon allayed.

But it burst out afresh when she was told during the very next week that he had again been late on three following mornings. This time Mrs. Umpleby found that his time had been spent in painting a neighbour's back-door, and she therefore felt some reasonable anger. This was much increased when Mike came home with the news that he was to leave at the end of a week.

'You lazy fellow!' she said; 'what do you mean by disgracing yourself and me like this?'

'I'm not a lazy fellow,' rejoined Mike; 'look how I work after hours at painting and things!'

Mrs. Umpleby was, in common language, quite floored by this answer, and said no more then. But in the evening she went off to an old bachelor brother, and told him the whole story.

'You are quite right, Maria,' said he; 'Mike is a lazy young dog.'

'But see how he works of evenings!'

'I don't care a pin about that. His first business is to stick to his day's work and earn his living. What's the good of always being ready to do things you are not wanted to do, and leaving your proper work undone?'

'I'm sure he's clever,' said Mrs. Umpleby, shirking the question.

'I dare say you've taught him so. But I'll teach him better than that; you let him come to me.'

'But you'll be kind to him, Joe?'

'Don't you fear; I'll show him real kindness in putting him in the way to be an honest man.'

So Mike went to work under his uncle, and was

soon taught that cleverness was a poor thing if it kept the mind off your day's work, and that his first business was to become a good workman at the trade by which he was to earn his living. A. R. B.

MY RAILWAY COMPANION.

IN a well-cushioned seat of a fast-going train I sat me down hoping (but hoping in vain) That pleasant companions might fall to my share, Alas! when we started, no person was there!

So then, all alone I must travel to-day,
With never a friend to enliven the way!
I must e'en be content with a book I suppose,
But to read on the railway (as every one knows)
Is fatiguing alike to the eyes and the brain,
So I hastily threw down the volume again.

At that moment I saw that I was not alone!
The discovery caused me some trouble I own,
For my new-found companion was not to my mind
(Though how to avoid him no way could I find).
'I won't be avoided,' cried he, with a will.
So he crept all around and about me until
I felt quite distracted with terror and woe
('Twas a wasp, my good children, I'd have you to know).

He crawled on my sleeve, and he buzzed in my hair,
Then flew all aloft in the close-heated air;
I opened the windows, and begged him to go.
'No, no, my good lady,' he whispered, 'not so;
You wanted sweet friendship, I offered you mine,
And now, ere I leave you, I purpose to dine.'

You've a nice little basket I see on your arm,
Pray wherefore exhibit such dreadful alarm?
There are cherries inside, by the odour I know,
Just give me a taste, then perhaps I may go.'

I opened my basket with hearty good-will,
I cunningly watched and I waited, until
Old yellow-coat, bursting with fury and rage,
Was safely inside, then I closed up my cage!

I peeped through the wicker, I jeered at the foe,
'You poor little stupid! now why did you go
Straight on to your doom? It was greed I opine,
But I'd have you to know that these cherries are mine.'

Not a word did old yellow-coat speak in reply,
But I caught such a wicked look straight from his eye,
That I firmly resolved in that prison he'd stay
Till we reached London town, at the close of the day.

When arrived at the city, I opened my trap,
My railway companion was taking a nap;
I lifted him gently, took of cherries a bunch,
And folded him up in a page of my *Punch*.

Then silently dropped him right down on the line,
If ever he woke from that sleep I opine,
That his first thought would be, while unfolding his wing,

'Well! to think she escaped me, with never a sting!'
D. B.



My Railway Companion.



Mr. Wilkins receiving the "full pitch" on his leg.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 307.)

CHAPTER X.



RICKET was an old institution at St. Egbert's, and the boys who showed the most skill at it were looked upon as great heroes by the rest of the school. Battersley liked the game, but had no hope of ever excelling much in it. On the other hand, Baylis was determined on winning a place in the eleven if he could. For a few days after he found out the trick played by the Sharps

(in getting other lads to break bounds and run the chance of coming in for heavy punishment, when they themselves had a permission to be out quietly hidden in their pockets), he went in very steadily for the game. But he played it in a dull, sulky frame of mind, and, of course, did not do himself justice. What vexed him more than this, in his temper then, was to see Battersley carefully bowling day after day, and often 'coached' by Dunstan or some other big fellow, who evidently thought his style worth a word of advice.

The probable choice of the new members of the eleven was often a subject for discussion in the bedroom occupied by the third and fourth. Freckles was a warm candidate, Baylis also seemed likely to get in, Bubb could bat fairly well in his stolid way, and Battersley was coming into some notice.

Young Tosstop had been suddenly seized with an idea that he would devote himself to the game, but the same mishaps that were always following him in other matters did not desert him here. Not caring to practice much in the field at first, he begged an old ball, borrowed a much-used bat, and began to try his skill in the playground.

Being a general favourite, young Tom had no difficulty in getting lads to keep him in his practice, but this soon came to an end. On the first day he landed a ball through the window of Dr. Swanage's study. Having been corrected for this offence, he thought he would try bowling instead. But, never having tried the round-arm method before, his very first delivery, a terrific full-pitch, went terribly astray, striking the unconscious Mr. Wilkins, who was passing at the time, in a way that made him certain somebody had thrown the ball for that express purpose. So Tommie's efforts in the playground soon came to an end, and with them his fervour for cricket also declined.

The vacant places in the eleven were to be filled up according to the results of a trial match, in which rival sides were to be pitted against each other. Battersley and Baylis were both amongst the selected candidates, and both were chosen of the same side. There was as yet no open quarrel between them, but Baylis was still in a sulky fit, and ready to fall out with anybody who would give him a chance.

On the day of the match he fell into conversation with the elder Sharp.

'Wish you luck, Baylis. Hope you'll get one of the places.'

'Thanks,' was the sulky answer; 'but I'm sure not to.'

'Pooh! yes, you will; unless that young beggar, Battersley, gets chosen.'

'They say he's getting on well with the bowling,' said Baylis.

'It isn't that,' said the other; 'but he toadies the big fellows—that's it. Mark my words, he'll get himself in; you see if he doesn't.'

This was not likely to drive away the harsh feelings he was beginning to hold towards his former friend. On the contrary, he began now to seize gladly any incident which could keep alive his anger.

His gloomy frame of mind was, of course, noticed by his class-mates and companions, who made various guesses as to the cause thereof. Tosstop, after much thought, came to the conclusion that Baylis was in love. Out of the slender material supplied by his looks and bearing he soon made up a pretty little pastoral drama in three acts, in which Baylis was represented as laying his hand and heart at the disposal of a farmer's daughter, who rejected him with scorn. This was supposed to lead the poor lover into great dejection, resulting at last in his drowning himself in the pond from which the damsel's cows were wont to drink. This production, which covered three sides of exercise paper, was seized with rapturous applause by the whole room, and at last reached the hands of Baylis himself, to whom it was conveyed, with many words of sympathy, by the younger Sharp. His anger against the anonymous author was hot for a time, but cooled on seeing that the more he raved the more everybody laughed. Then he went back to his sulks again.

On the following day the trial match was played. Baylis, to his great joy, came off very well, batting in a way that won praise from Dunstan, and fielding equally well. Battersley ran up a score of three, and came out to an easy ball. But, when their side had been fielding for some time, the game began to go against them. After trying several other bowlers, Dunstan, who was their captain, put on Battersley, and arranged the field to suit the change. They had not to wait long for the result. First one man was caught off the slows, then one was bowled, and soon afterwards the last man was caught. Thus the innings, which threatened to last disastrously long, was ended in a few minutes by means of the new bowler. When the list came out on the following day it contained the name of Battersley, whilst Baylis figured amongst the reserve men. Bubb, too, was amongst the chosen, and a place for Freckles had long been thought a certainty.

'I told you that young beggar, Battersley, would do it,' said the elder Sharp to Baylis, as they looked at the list; 'he has just kept you out of it.'

Baylis did not reply, but he was foolish enough to take the view of the question suggested by Sharp.

Later in the day Battersley met him.

'I'm awfully sorry you're not in the team, old boy.'

'Thanks,' was the reply, 'but I would rather be out of it than get a place through toadying the big fellows.'

'So would I,' said Battersley, in some surprise.

'Then what makes you do it?'

'I don't.'

'Pooh! I've seen you,' and with this he turned away.

But the other was not to be shaken off so easily.

'Baylis, don't go off like that. I never toadied anybody; you must have imagined it.'

'Oh, no, I didn't. I've seen it, and so have other fellows.'

'The Sharps, I suppose. I wish you were not so thick with them.'

'Never mind who I am thick with. Leave me alone; that's all I want you to do.'

This was decided enough, so that no further attempt was made to stop his departure. He went off to the cricket-field, and lounged up and down by himself. There he began turning his grievance over and over in his mind, feeding it with every look or word of his old friend which would fit in with his views. And yet he did not feel comfortable. His better nature rebelled against the rudeness, the idle suspicion, and the envy in which he was indulging. Why not cast it all off, go to Battersley, and be friends again? What? bend to that? What would the Sharps say? They *would* laugh at him then. They could see what Battersley was as well as he, and he would not make himself foolish in their eyes over this business. Not for a moment would he have confessed to himself that he was very much afraid of the laugh these two might raise against him. And yet it was so. He was much more afraid of being laughed at for daring to do right than of being punished for a direct wrong.

After school that afternoon he was a good deal surprised to see Dunstan come up to him.

'Oh, Baylis!' said the illustrious captain, 'we have made up our minds to put you down for the match on Saturday, after all.'

'Oh, thanks, Dunstan,' he replied, shaken out of his sulks at once by this good news; 'but who is going out?'

'You're to play instead of Battersley. His name is off this time, at any rate. You must be at the practice to-morrow, mind.' And with this he walked off in his dignified way.

Baylis went into the house in a better temper than he had been in for some time, noticing by the way the alteration of names in the eleven as posted up.

Sharp senior soon sought him out.

'Halloo, then; so you are to play, after all!'

'Yes; Dunstan has just told me so.'

'What's the reason?'

'I don't know. Can't make it out.'

'Have you seen that young beggar to ask if he knows?'

'No; I saw him this morning, and gave him a piece of my mind about toadying.'

'That's it, then, you bet. He's ashamed of himself, and says he won't play now.'

'But he said he didn't do it.'

'Of course, he said so to you. But this shows he did so, any way.'

This explanation did not seem very satisfactory to Baylis; but his pride grasped at it as a ready excuse for inquiring no further into the matter.

The change of names formed a fruitful topic of conversation at the tea-table that afternoon, and later on in the bedroom. Battersley had nothing to say on the subject, but he did not seem to take the affair very much to heart.

However, the matter soon dropped out of view, for Tosstop, remembering his brief zeal for cricket, struck in with a novel suggestion.

'I propose that we go and serenade Dunstan.'

The Sharps received the idea with jeers, and began to get into bed at once. But Freckles and some others fell in with the proposal.

'How's it to be done?' asked the former. 'If we make any noise we shall have Wilkins up.'

'Pooh!' said young Tom; 'we must do it quietly—*pianissimo*, as Wheeler says at the sing-song.'

'What shall we do?' asked Freckles, coming to the point at once.

'Oh, I'll do a tune on my comb, you know, with a piece of paper over it. Then we'll call out, "Three cheers for Dunstan and the eleven," and do them quietly, you know, in a kind of whisper.'

The idea of giving cheers in a whisper sounded strange in everybody's ears, but all were ready to join in any excursion in the corridor. Accordingly, four representatives were chosen—Tosstop, Freckles, Battersley, and Bubb.

In very scanty attire they crept down the dark corridor and into the passage where the noble sixth had each his little bedroom. There was a little doubt at first as to which was the right door, but at last they settled that point, and prepared to begin.

There was another little difficulty then about the comb, and, when at last the musician began to play, he could only produce the most dismal noises. His efforts did not excite the admiration of his companions, and they frequently stimulated him with such whispered advice as 'Peg away, old boy!' 'Can't you get out anything better than that?' and so on.

Presently the performer stopped in despair.

'It's so dark I can't see to do it well. Let's give the cheers.'

However, they did not get so far, for the inmate, who had been heard moving about, suddenly began to undo his door, saying in tones that certainly belonged to Nicholson, and not to Dunstan at all, 'All right, you young beggars! I'll teach you to try your games on me.'

The serenaders did not wait to explain, but set off at top speed, tumbling one over the other in their flight. Tosstop was brought to the ground just around the corner within the corridor, and Nicholson, rushing headlong after them, stumbled over the prostrate figure, and came also to the ground, striking his illustrious nose in a way that made him incapable of much for two or three minutes. Tosstop seized the opportunity to rise and decamp to the security of their room, where all the serenaders went promptly to bed without stopping to give any account of their adventures. They could hear sounds in the corridor which told them that the wounded was on his feet again. But, after what seemed like an undecided step or two in their direction, he moved back towards his own little chamber. Then all the snores suddenly ceased, and various heads popped up from the beds.



The Caged Bird.

Tosstop was at once called upon to tell what had happened—a task which he performed with great modesty, especially when speaking of his own performance on the comb.

'Oh, my! Won't you get it to-morrow!' said Sharp junior.

'Not a bit of it!' was the reply; 'in the dark all cats are grey, and Nicholson is as likely to think you were one of them as Bubb or me.'

'Oh, is he? I'll take care I don't get a licking for anybody else's idiotic tricks.'

'There's a feeling against sneaks in this room,' said young Tom, as though he was uttering his thoughts alone, and addressing the words to nobody in particular.

Sharp snorted contemptuously.

'And,' continued Tosstop in the same reflective tone, 'if I knew anybody who split on any of us over anything I should solemnly propose that that person be soundly clobbered.'

'Hear, hear!' cried two or three voices.

'And,' continued Tom, not deigning to notice the interruption, 'I will undertake to say that it would be done, and laid on uncommonly thick, too.'

Sharp snorted again, but in a rather less defiant way, and presently composed himself to slumber. The last thing he heard before falling asleep was the opinion of Freckles, given with a great firmness, that no mercy should be shown to any person who acted the traitor on this occasion.

(To be continued.)

THE CAGED BIRD.

O H, little bird, if you were free,
Free over all the world to roam,
Your wings would often tired be,
And you would often long to come
And chirp your little song to me,
And fold your tired wings at home.

E. M. A. F. S.



MY RABBITS.

LONG-EARED Bunny, bright-eyed Bunny,
 Bunny white and Bunny grey,
 Oh, I think you are so funny
 As I watch you at your play!
 With your long legs and your short legs,
 How you spring and dart away!

Bright-eyed Bunny, long-eared Bunny,
 Bunny grey and Bunny white,
 On this morning warm and sunny
 Would a run be great delight?
 Oh, but if your door I opened
 You would soon be out of sight!

E. M. A. F. S.

A BRAVE GIRL.



ABOUT one hundred and twenty years ago the pioneers of civilisation in the backwoods of North America were in almost constant collision with the most formidable of the Indian tribes, who had learned to use the weapons of the white men, and who were resolved upon driving away those pale-faced invaders of their hunting-grounds.

Many sad and terrible tragedies were enacted as the white settlers advanced further and further into the Indian country, travelling in large companies for safety, encamping at night by the watch-fire, while wild beasts howled all around them, and too often finding on their path the slain and mutilated bodies of their countrymen. But if their difficulties and dangers were great, still greater was the courage of the men who first set their hands to the conquest of the mighty wastes of wood which were spread for hundreds of miles on every side of them. They knew that the incursions of Indians were just as much to be expected as bad weather, or any other trial in life, and they did their best to be prepared for them, after which they went about their daily labours with wonderful cheerfulness, considering the anxious circumstances in which they were placed.

In a neighbourhood exposed to sudden attacks of the red men, the first thing done was to establish some place of refuge to which the inhabitants of the various log-cabins might repair for shelter and mutual help. This was often a square stockade, enclosing a group of cabins, with a bastion or block-house at each corner; every side of these rude citadels and the stockades being, of course, well furnished with loop-holes. Here (if well furnished with food and ammunition) a very small garrison could make a spirited resistance, and could generally hold out till relief arrived. Even women and girls in these rude encounters could perform feats of bravery from which men in more easy-going times might well have shrunk.

A remarkable instance of feminine courage was shown in 1782, when a frontier settlement on the Ohio was attacked by an unusually large body of Indians. The inhabitants, warned in time, had taken refuge in the fort, where there were twenty able-bodied men, with twice as many women and children, under the command of a brave man, Col. Silas Vane. His brother, Ebenezer Vane, remained in his own house about forty yards off, in order to protect a large quantity of ammunition which had been stored there, and which there was no time to remove. Some seven or eight men, and one or two women, remained with Ebenezer, and being stout of heart, they felt confident of being able to defend it.

The Indians, trusting to their numbers, attacked fiercely, but were again and again driven back. Through the night they tried to set fire to Ebenezer's house, but the design was frustrated by the vigilance of the defenders. Again the red men made a furious

assault both on the fort and the house; but again they were received with a close and deadly fire which considerably thinned their numbers, and filled them with the wildest fury. Meanwhile the women inside indulged in no weak lamentations, but steadily moulded bullets, loaded guns, and handed them to the men, who from every loophole were dealing death to the invaders, without even losing one of their number. But now a terrible discovery was made. Such a prolonged siege had not been anticipated, and in the fort only a few charges of powder remained! What was to be done? The enemy had once more fallen back; but they might be expected to renew the attack at any moment, and if they should learn the deficiency of the garrison, the brave defenders would soon be overpowered, fighting hand to hand with overwhelming numbers, while neither women nor children would meet with the smallest mercy. In this emergency there seemed nothing for it but that one of their number should dash out to Ebenezer's house, get a keg of powder, and bring it back under the fire of the besiegers. There were several volunteers for this daring service, which seemed almost certain death, considering that the woods all around were filled with the keen-sighted and furious enemy.

Among those willing to run the fearful risk was a girl, sister to the two Vanes. She had just returned from school in Philadelphia, and was quite unused to the stirring scenes of frontier life; but her spirit made up for her inexperience. It was represented to her that a man, being able to run quicker, would be in less danger, when the young heroine nobly replied, that a man's life was worth more than hers in the present exigency.

'You have not a man to spare,' she said, 'while a woman will not be missed.'

This was too true, and the girl was allowed to go. Throwing off such clothing as might hinder her speed, she stood ready at the gate. It was suddenly flung open, and she rushed out on her desperate errand.

The Indians were so taken by surprise that after exclaiming, 'A Squaw! A Squaw!' they did not fire a single shot. But upon the girl's return with a bag full of powder slung round her waist, they were upon the alert. She had to run the gauntlet of their balls; but not one touched her. Her anxious friends pulled her and her precious burden within the gate, while their shout of defiance told the Indians that the danger was over. They still hung about the fort, and made several other attempts to storm it, but with no better success. On the third day they retreated, giving up as hopeless the siege which would probably have ended far otherwise but for the heroism of a young girl.

D. B. McKean.

THE MAN-EATING TIGER.

TIGERS are numerous in all uncultivated parts of tropical Asia, but they abound most in the forests of India and Burmah. Did they remain in the woods, perhaps the people of those countries would not so much object to them; but they are great travellers, and soon find out that cattle and goats, which all

native villagers keep, are much more easily caught, and are quite as good eating, as the deer and similar wild animals that live in the forests; so as soon as the young tiger is able to eat meat the tigress (his mother) generally makes her home in the jungle, near a village, and thousands of cows and bullocks are annually killed and carried off to feed the cubs, between the months of July and December, by the end of which latter month the young are able to kill for themselves. The male tiger makes a bad father, and seldom helps the mother. At times, when very hungry, he has been known to kill and eat his own little ones, and terrible fights sometimes take place between the old ones for possession of the young. As a general rule, however, the male leaves his family to shift for itself and wanders about alone, hunting on his own account until the young ones leave the mother, who turns them out on the world when about nine months old. The rule does not hold good in all cases, as occasionally, where cattle are plentiful, five or six tigers, all of one family, have been found living together, and when such happens the poor cows disappear at the rate of two or three nightly, for the tiger is a dainty eater when cattle are plentiful and easily killed, and after one good meal on the choicest parts, the rest is left to the jackals and vultures, who devour the remains, skin and all, leaving nothing but the bare skeleton. Cattle soon discover when tigers are about, and as they can scent them a long way off, they graze on open ground, keeping well away from all jungle and especially large clumps of tall grass, which abound in the Indian plains, for, large as the tiger is, he can conceal himself in a comparatively small space, in which he crouches like the common cat, pouncing out on his prey when it comes within reach. The tiger is not a bold hunter, and very seldom chases the animal he jumps at if he fails to secure it in the first spring. He seems fully aware that his handsome gold-coloured skin, with its black stripes, would betray him to the stupidest cow if he showed himself on open ground, so he lurks in ditches by the roadside, and near drinking-places, where he can see but not be seen.

If the tiger would confine himself to the deer of his own forest, or be satisfied with an occasional cow or two, he would not be so troublesome or dangerous; but it is terrible to know that in British India alone, out of nearly twenty-five thousand human beings that meet their deaths yearly from wild beasts and reptiles, such as snakes, scorpions, and the horrible alligator, between four and five thousand are killed by tigers, and most of these unfortunate victims belong to that class who drive the cattle to and from the grazing-grounds and villages morning and evening.

The natives assert that when once a tiger tastes human flesh he is satisfied with no other, but I rather suspect that he finds an unarmed man is more easily caught than a cow or bullock. Whichever is the true reason, it is a well-established fact, that when one victim is carried off others are sure to follow, until the horrible beast is destroyed, either by the native hunters, called *shikaries*, or Europeans that may be residing in the neighbourhood. Both turn out to hunt the man-eater down when he makes his appearance, for, when he does so, he puts a stop to all business and travelling, and sometimes has been known

to cause a whole village to be deserted by the inhabitants. The Indian Government give a reward of one pound for the death of a common cow-killing tiger, but a hundred pounds, and more, for the destruction of a man-eater.

If the native hunters succeed in killing the tyrant they share the money among themselves; but with Europeans it is not considered right and proper to do this, and the money is consequently distributed among the relatives and families of those killed by man-eating tigers.

The terrible event that is shown in our illustration occurred near the village of Mettapollium, at the foot of the Neilgherry mountains, in the Madras province. Early in the month of August, a year or two back, the remains of a man were found a short distance from the road, lying in the jungle, and the marks of the tiger's paws in the muddy soil around too plainly told the tale as to the manner of his death. Three days afterwards a young woman who had gone to bathe in the river was missed, and upon a search being made along the bank, the searchers found a sheltered spot beneath some bamboos, where evidences of a struggle showed the fate that had befallen her. It now became certain that a man-eater was roaming round about, and the people, as you may suppose, were terribly frightened. They went about their business in gangs of a dozen, and at night time lit fires and kept beating the small native drums, *tomtoms*, from dusk to daylight. For a whole week nothing was heard or seen of the much dreaded animal, so the poor folk began to think he had gone elsewhere, and became more confident and careless. One cow-keeper, named Ramisawmi, whose cattle had been kept near the houses for some days, thought he might venture to take them to the usual grazing-ground across the river, and bidding good-bye to his wife and little ones, he drove his herd before him through the water, which at the ford was not more than two feet deep. The cattle passed over safely, and Ramisawmi was just making his way up the bank after them when, with a terrific roar that was heard all over the village, the man-eater sprang on him from out of the long grass that usually fringes the banks of all Indian streams. With one powerful blow of the cruel paw the poor man's neck was broken, and seizing him by the shoulder in his mouth the tiger bounded away towards the forest with his victim. Ramisawmi's horrified family witnessed the whole thing and, regardless of their own danger, ran shouting to the scene of the accident. The noise they made caused the brute to drop the body,—for though cruel, the man-eater is a cowardly creature—but the poor fellow was quite dead and fearfully torn by teeth and claws, as you may imagine.

It is satisfactory to know that the magistrate of the district, aided by some coffee-planters from the neighbouring mountains, successfully hunted down and killed the man-eater the very next morning, and that the full reward of a hundred pounds was equally shared out among the sorrowing relatives of the victims.

O. W.





The Man-eating Tiger.



Egyptian saving the life of his Cat.



A PARADISE OF CATS.

PUSSY has always been a favourite in the East, but the country where she was held in the highest estimation, and treated with the greatest respect, was Egypt.

The ancient Egyptians, those wonderful people whose pyramids and vast temples, though in ruins, still exist to attest their former greatness, had a strange veneration for certain animals which they considered sacred to their gods. The hawk was sacred

to Ra, the jackal to Anubis, the bull to Osiris, and the cat to the goddess Pasht, the Egyptian Diana. There were a great number of these animals sacred to various deities, the worship of some of them being confined to particular towns or districts; but the ibis, the hawk, the bull Apis, and the cat, were held in veneration throughout all Egypt. Several of these animals were kept in the temples of the deities to whom they were sacred; they were fed carefully on the food suitable to them, and when they died, their bodies were embalmed, and carried with great pomp and ceremony to the sepulchres devoted to them outside the town.

Bubastis was the sacred city of cats, and there was the temple of the goddess Pasht, whose statue appeared with the head of a cat. There the cats revelled in luxury, for they were looked upon as living representatives of the divinity. The punishment for killing any sacred animal was death; but woe to the luckless wight who even accidentally killed a cat! for he was set upon by the infuriated people, and torn to pieces without trial.

An instance of this happened whilst Egypt was still under the rule of the Greek dynasty of the Ptolemies. A Roman happening to kill a cat, his house was immediately surrounded by the Egyptians; and though the king sent his magistrates to them to try and calm their rage, neither their appeals, nor the terror of the Roman name were able to save the offender from vengeance; and though his fault was really an accident, he was dragged out of his house and put to death. 'Never,' says Cicero, 'did any one hear tell of a cat having been killed by an Egyptian.' And Herodotus, the Greek historian, who had himself spent some time in Egypt, and witnessed the customs of the natives, tells us that when a house caught fire the only care of the Egyptians was to save the lives of the cats, utterly regardless of the destruction of their property.

The fondness of the Egyptians for their cats is shown in some of their ancient paintings, where the cat is frequently seen by the side of its master whilst he entertains company; and in a picture in the Egyptian room of the British Museum a fowler is represented, accompanied by his favourite cat, who appears to be doing a little bird-catching on her own account. When a cat died, the whole household shaved off their eyebrows in token of mourning; and its body

was sent to the embalmer's, and there made into a mummy, and afterwards buried, with great lamentations, in the cat-sepulchre adjoining the town. Many devout persons sent the mummies of their favourite cats to the city of Bubastis, so that they might repose near the temple of the cat-goddess. Great numbers of these mummies have been found in Egypt, and some of them may be seen in the British Museum. They are all prepared in the same way: the legs and body being bound together with bandages, and the head, with a cat's face painted on the linen covering, being alone allowed to retain its natural form. The sepulchres for the sacred animals were small square chambers cut in the rock; some of them containing mummies of only one kind of animal; but frequently the mummies of dogs and cats are found together, for the dog was also a sacred animal, though it does not appear to have been such a general favourite as the cat.

The excessive reverence of the Egyptians for some animals appeared very strange to the Greeks and Romans, and ancient authors give various reasons for it; one being, that these creatures were at first held sacred on account of their usefulness to man, the cat especially being very necessary to destroy the scorpions and other vermin which infested Egyptian houses. But this hardly seems a sufficient reason for their actual worship, and it is more likely that they were supposed to be emblems of different powers in nature. The Roman satirists made themselves very merry over the odd custom of making deities of bulls, and cats, and hawks.

Though pussy is no longer worshipped as a goddess in Egypt, that country may still be considered as the happy land of cats; for whilst the dog is now an out-cast, and considered to be an unclean animal, pussy retains her place as a pet, though she has lost her divinity.

A former Sultan of Egypt left a bequest for the support of destitute cats in Cairo. But this was not sufficient, and the burden of their care has devolved on the Kadi, or chief judge; and every afternoon food is placed in the courtyard of his house for his numerous dependents, who may be seen at that hour coming down from the walls on all sides in prodigious numbers, when a battle ensues, the fiercest and strongest of the feline paupers getting the greater share of out-door relief, whilst the young or weakly get little more than the marks of teeth and claws.

A. R.

BRAVERY REWARDED.

DURING the long struggle which Great Britain maintained against Napoleon Bonaparte, it was sometimes the lot of British soldiers and sailors to be prisoners in France. In the month of June, 1810, a fire broke out at the town of Auxonne, which threatened to grow very serious. Some English soldiers, then detained in the place, exerted themselves so well that it was soon put out. A report of their conduct reached Napoleon. He examined into the affair, and, finding that the account of their skill and bravery had not been exaggerated, he ordered twenty-one of them to be sent home, with full pay for six months in their pockets.

A. R. B.


A STRANGE OCCURRENCE.

THOMAS EDWARDS, whose interesting life has been written by Dr. Smiles, was a poor shoemaker of Aberdeenshire, who rose to great eminence as a naturalist. He was often in great want, and on one particular occasion he was so overwhelmed by the absolute misery of himself and his family, that he determined to commit suicide. He went down to the edge of the sea for this purpose, when his attention was directed to a flock of sea-birds. Among them was one of a sort which he had never seen before, and its unusual appearance and flight roused in him all his natural love of knowledge.

Forgetting his miseries, he followed the birds with their strange companion for miles along the shore, but could never get near enough to fully satisfy his curiosity. At last, when he was quite wearied out and could follow no longer, he went home, resolved to come next day to continue the pursuit. But he never saw that bird again; and always regarded the sight as a special interposition of Providence to prevent him from committing the crime he had intended.

J. D. M.

THE CAPTAIN'S CHILD.

 GOOD thing is it to obey
Whom God hath set to rule,
And happy are our children trained
Betimes in duty's school.

Of such an one, to you, my friends,
A story I will tell;
A truthful and a touching tale,—
I pray ye, mark it well.

There was a child whose early home
Was on the rolling deep;
The waters sung his lullaby,
And rocked him to his sleep.

He was the captain's only child,
And when his mother died
He would not to her kindred send
The prattler from his side.

And so the little boy grew up,
A dweller on the sea;
For feats of horsemanship, he learned
To climb the tall mast tree.

The song of birds at early morn
It was not his to hear,
But the ocean breeze that swept the seas
Was music in his ear.

Yet was the ship a rugged school
For one so fair and young,
And harshly in his hearing oft
His father's accents rung.

For dearly as he loved the boy,
That love was never shown
In fond endearment, but in care
Of discipline alone.

Yet Harry was a merry boy
Brimful of fearless fun,
And blithely with a ship-boy's skill
Could up the rigging run.

Oh, but the sailors loved him well;
The sunshine of his smile
With memories of their childish days
Could home-sick hearts beguile.

All household loves on him were showered
As in their sight he grew,
And so the captain's child became
The darling of the crew.

Now of a monkey I must tell,
A droll and knavish elf,
The sailors' pet and Harry's plague,
A mimic of himself.

A grinning, chattering plague it was,
And mischievous full oft,
He clutched his cap from Harry's head,
And darted up aloft.

Up in the rigging with his prize
The thievish creature flew,
Now here, now there, it dodged about
And Harry followed too.

'Hollo! hollo!' the boy exclaimed,
'Such manners suit not me;
Come, Master Jacko, I must teach
Civility to thee.'

At first it was a merry chase
And blithely all looked on;
But many a weather-beaten face
Paled ere the cap was won.

The eager boy, without a thought
Of danger or of dread,
Had reached at length the topmost pole
Where scarce was room to tread.

Where none could turn and none could bend,
He stood in dizzy trance,
Beyond the reach of others' help,
Nor dared the downward glance.

Breathless with fear the crew looked up,
None spoke and no one stirred,
Not even when the captain's tread
Upon the deck was heard.

What is the matter now, my men?
Why stand you moon-struck here?'
None answered him—one look above
Revealed the speechless fear.

Pale with his agony, the boy
Is trembling, ere he fall
Upon the deck with murderous crash—
The captain saw it all.

But not a nerve or muscle yet
With quivering anguish shook;
'Bring me my fowling-piece,' he said,
And steadfast aim he took.



The Captain's Child.

Then stern, and loud, and trumpet-clear,
He cried, 'Attend to me!
This moment, sir, I fire, unless
You jump into the sea.'

A life-long agony compressed,
Throbs in the breast of all;
Not on the deck—not on the deck,
Resounds the dreadful fall.

Off at his father's word, he springs
Far in the yielding wave,
And many a sailor overboard
Dashed after him, to save.

Safe! safe! Now quickly on the deck
The rescued boy they bear,—

Then failed at once the father's heart,—
He might not linger there.

No! ere his trembling arms enfold
The child to hope restored,
Locked in his cabin all alone
His wordless thanks are poured.

Too deeply stirred his being's tide,
Another's eye to brook,
While shuddering sobs so long suppressed
His frame with trembling shook.

Calm in the might of prayer, at length
He bade them bring his boy,
And clasped him to his yearning heart
With all a father's joy.



The Turnip.

I tell not of the interview
Which none beside might share;
The loves of father and of son
What language can declare?

Yet from my story, you, my friends,
May of obedience learn,
And how the truest love may wear
An aspect strange and stern.

THE TURNIP.

AN uncommonly large turnip had grown in the garden of a poor day-labourer. 'I will present it to the king,' said he, 'for he is always pleased if his subjects cultivate their fields and gardens well.' So he carried the turnip to the castle, and the king praised his industry and good-will, and gave him three gold pieces.

A peasant in the village, who was very rich and covetous, heard of it, and said, 'Now I will give my great calf to the king. If he gave three gold pieces for a paltry turnip, how much more will he give for such a beautiful calf!' So he led it by a string to the castle, and begged the king to accept it as a present. But the king, seeing why the peasant was so liberal, said that he did not wish for the calf. The man begged him hard not to refuse the offered gift. 'Very well,' said the wise king: 'since you press me so much I will accept it. But as you are so liberal I will not be stingy, and I will make you a present which cost me certainly two or three times as much as your calf is worth.' And with these words he gave the astonished and crest-fallen peasant the well-known big turnip!

M. H.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 316.)

CHAPTER XI.



WHEN the would-be serenaders of Dunstan came down to prayers the next morning, they were horrified to see that Nicholson had two little pieces of sticking-plaster arranged across the middle of his nose. He glared at all their table during prayers and breakfast with an air of terrible ferocity, and just before the first bell was seen in active council with Bruin Grant. When morning school was over, these two worthies began to chase the third and fourth boys. Green was the first capture, and he was soon tortured into readiness to give up the names of the guilty. But then the cobbing? He felt sure that Freckles and Tosstop would keep their word, and so he would come in for a double punishment. He, therefore, took refuge in a falsehood, and denounced the two Sharps as the ringleaders. Nicholson and Bruin, not knowing the true character of these worthies, gave them a sound thrashing, treating their protestations of innocence as so many attempts to escape the just punishment of their acts.

In the afternoon the match came off. Nearly all the boys were there and some strangers from Winterham in addition. Tosstop was placed in the dignified position of scorer, in the enjoyment of

which post he displayed quite a sheaf of lead pencils, and ordered the youthful spectators to 'stand out of the light' in the most business-like manner.

Baylis came down to the field nervous and excited. Now, he thought, was the time for him to prove that Dunstan was in the right when he gave him Battersley's place.

With some people, this state of mind would have been fatal to their success. With Baylis it was not so. He fielded well, made a good catch, and ended his share in the game by scoring a round dozen in very good style.

'Well done, Baylis!' said Dunstan, when he was put out, a piece of praise which raised the subject to a high pitch of happiness. Next two or three lads came round him with congratulations, and Battersley was amongst them. Baylis looked in his face. It was honest and genuine if ever face was. But he saw Sharp looking on, and turned coldly from him.

St. Egbert's won by ten runs, so that Baylis felt himself to have had a real share in making the victory. When the game was over, he took advantage of his success to put a question to Dunstan.

'How was it you moved me into the eleven instead of Battersley?'

The question looked very much as though it was prompted by a foolish wish to hear his own praise sung. But that was only the secondary cause. His real wish was to know what had brought the change about, for his mind was not quite easy at the thought of supplanting an old friend.

'Never mind about that,' said the captain; 'you have shown that we were quite right in doing it.'

'Yes; but I want to know. Do tell me, now?'

'Well, the fact is Battersley said he didn't want to play, and that he wouldn't play; so, of course, you came in as the next man.'

'Did he know I should get the place?'

'Can't say, of course. But he seemed to think so.'

This was but little satisfaction. It showed clearly enough that he owed his place to Battersley, although it did not explain the reasons which may have led him to take such a step. However, it was enough to make him accept the condition of things without any more inquiry as to how they came about. He was in the eleven, and that was enough.

As Bubb and Freckles had also done well in the match, the room in which their two classes slept was very jubilant over the skill shown by their members. On the proposal of Tosstop it was unanimously agreed that steps should be taken to celebrate their victory in a fit and proper manner. Whilst several of the fifth had been unsuccessful in obtaining places, it was no small glory to the third and fourth that three youngsters from their ranks should have been found in the eleven, and have shown themselves quite worthy of the dignity. The only question was, how could this fact be most properly celebrated? Bubb, ever intent on the wants of his body, suggested that the three heroes should be indulged in 'a jolly good blow-out' at the expense of the community. But this plan met with dissent on all sides. Then the difficulty was solved by Knott, a quiet lad with a taste for music, proposing that they should borrow the old class-room, and have a musical evening.

The room in question was a disused apartment in which brooms and buckets were occasionally placed. It had often been granted for school or class meetings, when a satisfactory reason could be shown for the request.

Tosstop felt sure that the loan of this room for one evening would be permitted, if they only agreed to finish in time to get their lessons prepared. He, himself, was willing to be one of the deputation to ask the question. Battersley, as being now near the top of the class, was also selected. Their request was at once granted, and all that remained was to make the necessary preparations.

When tea was over, there was a tumultuous rush on the part of the third and fourth towards the room in question. On getting there, everybody began to talk at once, and it was not until Tosstop mounted an old table—the only piece of furniture in the room—that any order could be obtained.

'Now then,' he cried, 'quiet, you fellows! or they'll soon have us out of this again.'

There was a lull in the storm for a few seconds, and then it broke out again more fiercely than ever.

'I see you, Choundy,' cried the chairman; 'you're at the bottom of this row. Turn him out.'

This command, being very agreeable to the ideas of the majority, was at once obeyed, and Choundy was ejected from the room in a very ignominious manner.

He revenged himself when outside by kicking desperately at the door for some time, and then shouted through the key-hole, 'All right, you see if I don't pay you out for this!' But nobody paid any attention to so foolish a threat.

'Now,' said Tosstop, when order had been somewhat restored, 'what shall we begin with?'

More uproar was the answer to this question, everybody giving what he thought should be the first item on the programme. Then Tosstop once more interfered.

'Knott, you give us a solo!'

This suggestion met with general approval, and Knott was soon placed upon the table which was to act as platform. He drew a flute from his pocket, and put it to his lips. But the very first breath blew a cloud of dust into his eyes which made him dismount from the platform with great speed, denouncing in strong language two small boys who had borrowed his instrument that afternoon.

Whilst the disappointed musician was rubbing his eyes, the Chairman looked around for other performers, and at last called upon Williams and his friend Stock to give them a duet.

This pair accordingly mounted the table, and announced that they would whistle, 'God save the Queen.' But, on pursing up their lips to begin, somebody at the other end of the room laughed. The result was fatal. The two musicians tried valiantly to keep their countenances, but all in vain, and who can whistle whilst struggling against a smile? The audience saw their difficulty, and began to laugh in a body; and the more the performers tried to keep sober, the louder grew the laughter from all sides of the room. Then they tried the experiment of shutting their eyes and trying to whistle, forgetful of the company. But all was in vain, and they were

obliged to come down from the platform without having uttered a note. The Chairman now made one more effort to provide music by calling upon a small boy, named Milsom, to sing a song. To the astonishment of all present, he moved the table against the wall, mounted it, and stood up with his back to everybody. Then, without a word of preface, he began to sing in a shrill little treble voice. Everybody laughed at this odd scene, but the youngster took no heed until his first verse was finished, when he jumped down, and was heard to say something about 'grinning donkeys' or some such curious animal.

All hopes of a musical evening having thus vanished, the Chairman stood up to address the meeting.

'Look here, you fellows!' he said, 'as we can't get any music out of anybody, I shall propose a toast.'

'Buttered?' cried somebody at the back of the room.

'Not buttered,' continued the orator, 'nor dry either.'

'Dry enough,' said the voice.

'Nor dry either,' repeated the Chairman; 'but, before we get so far as that, I shall feel it my duty to point out a certain person as disturbing this meeting unless he gets quieter.'

This appeal had an unexpected result, for everybody became anxious to turn out somebody else, and nobody seemed quite to know with whom they ought to start. It ended in two of the smallest boys beginning a desperate encounter near the door, and it became necessary for the Chairman to descend and quell the disturbance in person.

This done, he again mounted the table with great dignity, and went on with his address.

'As I was saying just now, I beg to propose a toast. We all know what a jolly good stand our fellows made this afternoon. If you look at the score, you'll see that —'

'We're locked in!' cried a voice from the rear.

Upon this interruption there was a general rush to the door. It was locked fast enough. They heard, too, a voice outside. It was that of the ejected Choundy.

'All right,' he said, in an encouraging tone: 'try away; but you won't get out. Haven't I got you nicely? Oh, my!'

At these words the prisoners could almost fancy they saw the plotter turning up his eyes to the ceiling in an ecstasy of enjoyment, and their anger grew stronger than ever.

'Open the door!' cried Green; 'don't you think you are going to take us in like this.'

'I'll teach you manners,' said the indignant Freckles.

'Don't care,' cried the desperate young Choundy; 'you can lick me all round to-morrow if you like; but I've paid you out.' And then he once more began encouraging the prisoners to 'go it,' assuring them that lesson-time was close at hand, and their presence would soon be expected in the schoolroom.

The leaders looked at each other in amazement. What was to be done?

'Let's stay here,' said Sharp, 'and take it quietly; it will get him into a jolly row.'

But the general verdict was against conduct of that nature.

Presently Battersley was seized with an idea, and made an inspection of the lock.

'Who will lend me a knife?' he asked.

A half-a-dozen were at once brought out. Choosing a strong one he went down on his knees at the door, and, using the knife as a screwdriver, began to coax out the screws of the catch. The lock and its furniture were cheap, and the screws were those black, round-topped kind which lend themselves easily to removal. In a very few minutes the first of the two screws holding the catch was out. Presently the second followed, and the catch slipped into the workman's hand. Then the noise in the room, which had been kept up in order to cover the sound of unscrewing, ceased, as the door was flung open and the leaders rushed out upon the unfortunate Choundy. The latter, however, was not inclined to receive punishment without protest, and, no sooner were his enemies upon him than he raised a terrific yell, which brought Mr. Wilkins to the scene, and caused his oppressors to assume, in a moment, looks of meek astonishment, as they filed along the corridor towards the schoolroom. Their remarkable quietude had such an effect upon the junior master that he severely rebuked Choundy for his disorderly conduct, nor did he guess that the other lads had any connexion with the yell, until, turning around somewhat suddenly, he saw Tosstop imitating in dumb show the process of giving a 'jolly good hiding,' to an imaginary foe. Choundy and he were thereupon awarded the same punishment; and thus the matter ended.

Baylis had taken but little part in the evening's entertainment; but success had had the effect of putting his sulky fit to flight, and, to all but Battersley, he was now as cheerful as ever. The elder Sharp seized the opportunity of making friendly advances.

'What wretched stuff pleases these youngsters!' said he. 'I can see how they have been boring you.'

'Well, yes, they have, rather.'

'Look here, let us celebrate the victory in our own way. Come in to Winterham with me to-morrow. I'll ask Bubb too, and we'll have some fun before tea.'

Now Baylis was not much pleased at this invitation. He did not know what it might mean, and he had not forgotten his last excursion with Sharp. But he did not see his way to saying No, and therefore said Yes, with the best grace possible. On thinking the matter over in the evening, it seemed to him that now he was always getting into the company of the boys he cared little for, whilst drifting away from those he knew to be the more manly and sincere. And yet he did not see how it was to be helped, and, after all, what harm was there in the Sharps? It would be time enough to quarrel with them when he found them out in anything mean or unfair. They had at any rate, he thought, done him a good turn in showing him what Battersley really was, and, of course, they couldn't help being muffs at cricket and other boyish games.

He was to learn, however, that the brothers had more serious faults than these.

(To be continued.)



"Well done, Baylis!" said Dunstan.



Battle between a Stoat and a Rat.



THE STOAT AND THE RAT.

ONE morning in October I had occasion to go to Benver. I was riding my favourite mare, Betty; the sharp air made the exercise of riding most delightful.

My way led through a pretty avenue of trees, shaded with every variety of colour. Suddenly Betty turned her head on one side and pricked up her ears as if she heard some strange noise; at first I thought it was the wind having a frolic with the dead leaves, but I was quickly undeceived.

A big rat, by the side of a hollow tree, was having a desperate battle with a stoat. How the little fellow could venture to attack the rat was a mystery to me. The way they fought was really surprising. At one time I quite thought the stoat would be victorious (for I had reined up my horse to look at this novel sight); it fastened with desperate energy on to the rat, both rolling over together; sometimes the stoat would give the rat a terrific bite; the kind of shriek it gave was most distressing.

The stoat seemed to take especial care not to allow the rat to escape into its hole, which was quite near. The two combatants were so engrossed they did not perceive me; after watching them for some time I was obliged reluctantly to continue my ride.

On my return, about four hours afterwards, I saw the stoat sitting quietly by the rat, which was quite dead, as if enjoying its victory. I got down to examine it more closely, upon which the stoat disappeared quickly enough, and I found the brain of the rat was pierced by the sharp teeth of the stoat, so causing its death.

M. B.

THE CASPIAN SEA.

THE Caspian Sea, which lies between Asiatic and European Russia, has some remarkable and interesting peculiarities. It is a vast lake of salt water, yet it has no connexion with the ocean, and, strange to say, its surface is more than eighty feet lower than that of the Black Sea. From a careful survey of the surrounding countries, it has been proved that this immense volume of water may be considered as the surviving drop of a former mighty ocean, which in past ages must have overspread the land.

The Caspian is about seven hundred and forty miles in length and two hundred and ten in average breadth, its depth being very variable. Towards its northern end it is very shallow, and the amount of earth and stone brought down by great rivers still further reduces the depth, till this end of the lake will eventually become nothing but a saltwater marsh; in other parts, however, it has been sounded to a great depth without reaching the bottom.

Into this great lake many important rivers, such as the Volga, discharge themselves; and, although the volume of water thus received must equal in quantity that which is discharged into the Black Sea, yet the whole amount is only sufficient to make up for the

loss sustained by evaporation, as is evident from the fact that the present level of the Caspian remains stationary, or, if it changes at all, rather sinks than rises. The proportion of salt in the Caspian Sea is much less than that of the ocean, and there are no perceptible tides.

The animal life of this inland sea is very varied, and presents a curious mixture of marine and freshwater types; the presence of seals and herrings telling of its former union with the ocean, while the salmon, which inhabits either fresh or salt water, also abounds. Great fisheries have been established on the shores of the Caspian Sea, and these are of much value, large quantities of the produce being salted for transmission to other places. That valuable fish the sturgeon has also its home in these waters, and supplies nearly all the civilised world with caviare and isinglass; the former being a condiment prepared from the salted roe of that fish, and the latter its swimming bladder, dried, and cut into strips.

Various parts of the shore abound in naphtha and petroleum in such quantities that on boring a hole in any part the naphtha at once rises to the surface. Round the town of Baku there are nearly one hundred bituminous springs, some of which are continually burning, and an extensive trade is carried on in these valuable commodities.

D. B. MCKEAN.

THE COST OF WAR.

TO most English lads there is something attractive in the glitter and pomp of armies. But we must early learn to judge otherwise than by looks only. Often in the course of great wars the loss of life in a single year has equalled in numbers the destruction of every adult male in some of our largest cities. Nor must we put out of sight the direct cost in money. It has been estimated that the wars with France, from the year 1793 to 1815, cost our country more than *fourteen hundred millions of pounds*. No wonder that the necessities of life rose in value until, in the year 1811, the average price of the quarter-loaf was eighteen pence. They are usually the readiest advocates for war who have seen or felt none of its horrors.

A. R. B.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF A PAIR OF BELLOWS.

PHILOSOPHY! Do not be frightened at this big word and pass on, saying to yourself that it is no use your reading that, as you will not be able to understand it; because I think that, when I have explained the meaning of it in my way, you will find that it is not nearly so hard as you had expected. Well, then, what I mean by philosophy is 'the why' and 'the wherefore;' and when I say the philosophy of a pair of bellows, I mean to tell you why or how do they do their business.

Do you know that those men who have always wished to learn 'the why' have been those who have made the grandest discoveries? You have all heard the story of Sir Isaac Newton, who while lying in his garden one day saw an apple fall from a tree to the ground, and though he had seen the same

thing many times before, on this occasion he asked himself why it thus fell, and why everything should always fall to the earth when left to itself? It was by thinking this question over, and looking at it from all points of view, that he at last discovered that wonderful law of gravitation, or the force of attraction, which is not only the power by which the earth attracts and holds everything to its surface, but is also the law that governs the motions of sun, moon, and stars. Then there was George Stephenson, who invented the steam-engine, through watching the steam lifting the lid of his mother's kettle and asking himself why it did so.

Now about the bellows. Of course you have all heard of the boy who cut open his mother's bellows to see where the wind came from, and I dare say you have laughed at it too. It was too bad of him to destroy his mother's property, yet it showed that he had an inquiring mind and wished to know 'the why,' and I can tell you that there is more even in a pair of bellows than many people are aware of.

The first thing we must consider is the air that is drawn into the bellows. Although we cannot see this something which we call air, and which is a combination of different gases, and surrounds us everywhere, filling up every otherwise vacant space, yet it has certain properties, among which we may name its weight, for it presses with a force of about fifteen pounds to every square inch. It has also elasticity, or expansion: that is, a portion can be compressed into a small space, or made to fill a larger place. If an otherwise empty bottle be corked up it will be full of air, but if a portion of that air can be drawn away and the bottle corked up again, the air remaining in the bottle will expand until it has filled every part, though of course it will be thinner, and will not therefore press with so much weight on each part.

Now let us see what this has to do with the bellows. The body of the bellows is so made that the space inside can be made larger or smaller at pleasure. From the end of the body there is the snout, a pipe which is larger at that end which joins the body, and gradually gets smaller towards the other end. At one side of the body is a large hole, covered over inside with a lid or valve, which works freely on a hinge. We will suppose the bellows to be closed. Now take them by the handles and open them to their fullest extent. As you do this, you give the air inside more space to fill, and as it expands to fill it, of course it does not press with so much weight on each part; so the air outside has more power, and pushes open the valve and rushes in until it is all filled with air that is of equal density, or closeness, or thickness, so to speak, and that presses equally everywhere. You now press the handles together, thus making the space inside much smaller, which would force the air out again; but as the valve opens inside, the force only shuts it tighter, so that it cannot get out the same way that it entered: but there is another way out, namely, through the pipe or snout, and as that is comparatively small it goes rushing through it with great force, the more so as the further it gets the smaller the outlet, so that the particles of air push each other with more force until they get out.

Or look at it in this way. Suppose a large room with a good-sized door, swinging freely on hinges, and opening inwardly, big enough to let in seven or eight boys at a time. A crowd of boys are outside pressing to get in, and in they go until the room is getting full and the door is gradually closing, and the last one has just squeezed through, and the door shuts with the pressure. Now, suppose that by some mechanical contrivance the room is gradually made smaller, and although you were tightly packed before, you are now getting packed tighter still, and you cannot possibly get out by the door through which you entered, as the greater the pressure the more impossible is it for the door to be opened: yet up in one corner is a passage which will admit about three at a time, and you all throng towards it, but you find that it gets narrower as you go on, and so you press against each other with more and more force until you reach the end.

Do you see 'the why' now? By enlarging the inside of the bellows you cause a vacancy, or *vacuum* as it is called, which the air outside tries to fill by pushing open the valve and rushing in; and then you squeeze it up again, and as it shuts the valve tightly, by its own pressure, it must find its way out by the only passage left, which is through the pipe.

Let me add, that owing to the uniform pressure of the air, if, when the bellows are closed, you stopped up the snout, and securely fastened the valve, so that no air could possibly enter, you would find that it required some amount of force to open the bellows, as you would have to overcome that outside pressure, the air not being able to get inside to counterbalance it; and the moment you let go the handles the bellows would close. Likewise if you stopped these holes up when the bellows were open, you would find it difficult to close them, as the air will bear being pressed together up to a certain point, but beyond that it would either resist your efforts or burst a way out. Truly there is a 'why' even in a pair of bellows.

W. J. C.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

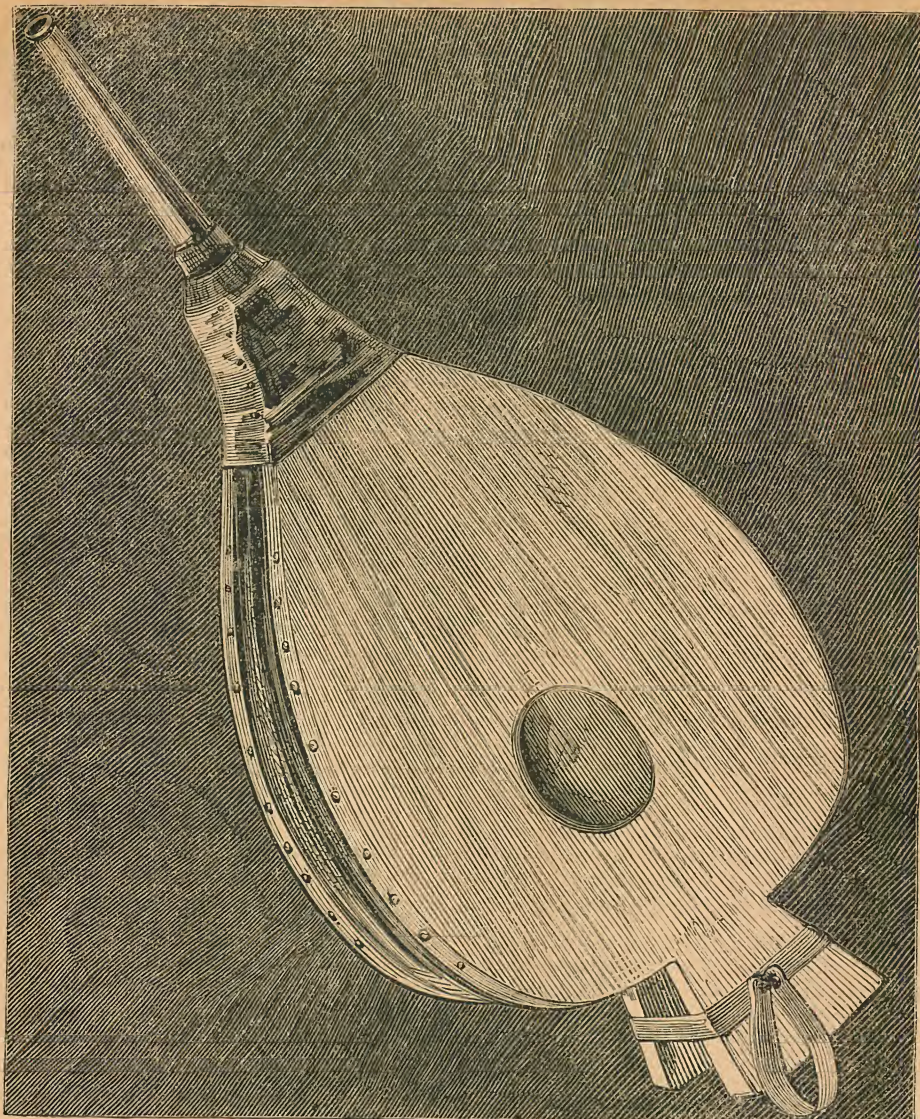
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CHAPTER XII.

NO sooner was afternoon school over on the following day than the two Sharps, with Baylis and Bubb, set out for Winterham. The village being out of bounds, they had to take care that nobody in authority knew of their destination. To avoid the affair being talked of at table, they said nothing to anybody about the excursion.

The village was reached in safety, and the elder Sharp at once led the way to the 'Laurel Tree,' a public-house on its outskirts. Passing through the house like a person to whom it was well known, he brought his friends into what they soon found to be a skittle-alley. It was empty at the time, for the Winterham players had not then finished their work. 'Now,' said the elder Sharp, taking up one of the balls, and sending it spinning down the alley, 'this is what I call fun.'

Bubb, too, did not seem strange to this, or, at any



A Pair of Bellows.

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rate, similar places, for he handled a ball in a way that spoke of previous practice. Baylis alone was really uncomfortable, but did not like to show it before such old men of the world as the two Sharps had become at the ages of fifteen and fourteen.

A game was soon made up—the two Sharps against Baylis and Bubb, and a supply of beer was called for in order to refresh the players.

Now, although Baylis was uncomfortable enough at starting, he soon became interested in the game, and quite forgot his scruples. Indeed, when he and Bubb, being the losers, were called upon to pay the cost of the entertainment, he put down his share willingly.

‘Now,’ said Sharp, as they went back, ‘don’t you think this is a jollier way of spending a couple of hours than hanging around the playground?’

Baylis and Bubb both agreed that it was, and suggested another visit at an early date, a plan which was much approved of by the two Sharps.

On their second visit, they found Bruin Grant and several others there from the fifth, who were good enough to let them join in their game, and took great care to see that they paid their share of the expenses. As, however, this brought the Sharps into the losing side, they did not seem to enjoy the game so much as on the former occasion. After this they did not care to play, except when alone with their own classmates.

Their visits to the ‘Laurel Tree’ became so frequent that Baylis was often missed from his place in the cricket-field. A second match was at hand, and Dunstan had to lay great stress on his presence there. This did not tend to increase the confidence with



“ ‘This is what I call fun,’ said Sharp.”

which Baylis played; nor, indeed, were the excitements of the skittle-alley, and draughts of bad beer, likely to steady the nerves. The result was just what might have been expected. He fielded badly, and made for his score a solitary one, by a very bad hit from which he should have been caught out. He was not surprised, therefore, to learn on the following day that, whether Battersley played or

not, somebody would have to take the place of Baylis.

Sharp undertook to console him.

‘I’m jolly glad you’re out of it. What’s the good of grinding away on hot days in that field, when you might be having a jolly quiet game at the “Laurel Tree”?’

As a matter of fact, both Sharps were glad of any-

thing which threw Baylis into their hands, for, in their own class at any rate, they did not find their company at all sought for.

The loss of his place in the eleven produced in Baylis another fit of sulky indifference, which made him fall in readily with any plans of his new friends. As a consequence of this, their visits to the 'Tree' became more and more frequent.

But games of skittles, accompanied with drinks of various kinds, and tips to the boy who 'set up,' cannot be played without some expense; and Baylis soon found himself very near bankruptcy. On discovering his condition, he asked the elder Sharp for a small loan.

'My dear fellow,' replied he, 'I would do it in a moment if I could, but I really haven't the coin.'

'Then I shall have to cut the "Tree," for I'm cleaned out.'

'I tell you what, though, I dare say Martin would do it.'

Martin was the landlord of the 'Laurel Tree,' a young man of fast habits, who was thought by the Winterham people to 'know what he was about.'

'I shouldn't like to ask him,' replied Baylis.

'Oh, I'll do that,' said Sharp. 'He'll do it for me, I know.'

The question was soon asked and answered at the next visit. Mr. Martin did not see his way to parting with money, but 'the young gentlemen' were free to 'go on tick' for their games and refreshments, which, as Sharp pointed out, came to just the same thing.

So the games went on as before, and the players did not drink the less because it had not to be paid for on the spot. It was such a simple matter just to have it put down, and one glass more or less did not make much difference. Of course, Baylis had soon got beyond the stage in which a strong cigarette made him sick, and was now an accomplished-smoker, using a good deal of tobacco in the course of one week's visits to the 'Tree.'

Although Battersley had heard little of these visits, they were well known to Nicholson, Grant, and some others of the bigger fellows who indulged in the same habits.

One day, when Battersley was reading a tattered copy of the *Last of the Mohicans* in a corner of the playground, Leslie stumped up with his crutch.

'Are you thick with Baylis now?' he asked.

'Not very,' was the cautious answer.

'Because it would be a charity to put him on his guard against the "Laurel Tree;" from what I can hear, he is a good deal too often there now.'

'It's no good my speaking to him,' said Battersley; 'he will only put it down to jealousy, or get in a wax at my interference. You do it.'

'I don't see how I can do it,' said Leslie, musingly; 'but I'll try, any way.'

He did try, but, unfortunately, the moment was not well chosen. Meeting Baylis alone in the playground the next day, he began to speak on the subject. But it so happened that the younger lad had just come back from the 'Laurel Tree,' and had not quite walked off the effect of his potations during the game. He was therefore in no humour for criticism. Leslie began in what he thought was a very wise

and judicious strain; but the other saw what was coming.

'Look here,' he said, in a defiant tone, 'I don't see what business it is of yours where I go, if you are in the sixth.'

'Oh, yes, it is. The reputation of the school is something, young man, even supposing one could let youngsters go to smash before their eyes without saying a word.'

'Never mind my going to smash; go and talk to Bruin Grant and fellows of your own size. They go there as much as I do.'

Baylis was evidently so excited as to make further persuasion useless, and Leslie left him with one or two kindly words, which ought to have showed the younger lad that such interference was not the result of a meddlesome nature, but was done with good intent. To his mind, however, it was nothing more than a disagreeable piece of meddling on Leslie's part.

Battersley soon heard the result of this meeting, and wisely judged that any words from him would be taken in a worse spirit than those of Leslie. He therefore said nothing about it on the rare occasions when the two former friends met.

One day that summer an event happened which nearly put an end to the 'Laurel Tree' visits for a time, at any rate.

As Dr. Swanage was walking slowly towards Winterham one Wednesday afternoon, he felt sure that he saw before him a party of three lads from St. Egbert's. Their outlines seemed known to him. But what were they doing there? Whilst he was making up his mind to hasten after them and identify these lawless breakers of bounds, they suddenly vanished from his sight.

The Doctor took off his spectacles, rubbed them, and looked in front again.

No, the boys were gone. Where were they?—that was the next question.

A few steps more showed him the sign of the 'Laurel Tree' swinging in the air, just about the spot where the lads had disappeared.

'Ah,' said Dr. Swanage to himself, 'that wretched fellow Martin is decoying my boys into his house again. But I'll catch them there this time.'

Unfortunately, however, his approach had been seen by an hostler who knew the ways of the house, and who at once ran in with the news to his master. The three visitors, who were no others than A. Sharp, Green, and Bubb, had scarcely entered the skittle-alley when Martin came running in.

'Here's your gu'nor, Swanage, coming. You had better put yourselves out of sight somewhere, or else, if he finds you here, he'll be damaging my house.'

The lads looked around for places of hiding.

'This way,' said Martin; and leading them into the house, he helped Green into a large empty copper in the scullery, jammed Baylis into a kitchen cupboard, and hoisted Sharp into a loft above. This done, he lounged out to the door, and met the Doctor just arriving.

'Oh, good morning, Martin; I think you had three customers just come in?'

'Yes, sir; what's your pleasure with them?'

'I want to see them.'

'Certainly,' said Martin, with an injured air, as he led the way to a tap-room, where three labourers were squabbling over their ale.

'These are not the people I want,' said the Doctor. 'Show me the lads who came in just now.'

'The lads! There must be some mistake. You won't find any lads here.'

Considering the Doctor's weak sight, and Martin's rapid manœuvres, this was very likely.

'I think you have a skittle-alley?' continued Dr. Swanage.

'Yes, sir. You didn't want to play, I suppose?'

'No, sir, I did not,' said the Doctor, who began to lose his temper; 'but I should like to see your players.'

'None there, sir, I'm afraid. Evening is the time for that.'

However, the Doctor was shown the alley, and invited to make any other inspection he thought desirable. He peered around the place, and left, after apologising to Martin for the trouble he had given.

That worthy saw that when Dr. Swanage left the 'Laurel Tree' he did not continue his walk through Winterham, but went back again at a brisk pace towards St. Egbert's. He at once ran in with the tidings. Releasing Green and Baylis from their prisons, and calling down Sharp, he said,—

'You young gentlemen had better cut along home at once. That old guv'nor of yours is gone straight back to the school; and he's going to see who is out, you bet.'

'But you can't pass him without his seeing us,' said Sharp.

'Of course you can't; but there's the other way. You must cut across the fields at the back here, through Parker's farm to the road again by St. Egbert's; and you'll have to run to do it.'

'Let's be off at once,' said Sharp, in evident alarm. And they set out forthwith.

'I suppose Martin is doing this to take a rise out of us, is he?' suggested Green; 'because,' he continued, stopping his flight, 'I wouldn't let a fellow like that take me in.'

'Stuff!' said Sharp; 'it's all right—or, rather, wrong. Didn't you hear Swanage's voice?'

'Well, I suppose it is,' said Green.

Their cross-country journey was not performed without some misfortunes. There was, in one place, a rather broad ditch to be crossed, and Sharp, being nothing of an athlete, landed just in the soft, sticky mud at its edge.

'Never mind,' said Green; 'cheer up, old boy.'

At the very next hedge he himself was caught in a thorn, which left a long rent in his trousers. Soon after this they struck the footpath, and had easy going; but their appearance drew a good many remarks from the boys they passed. In one field some country lads, who were playing cricket, burst into loud guffaws at their torn and muddy state. Some asked after their tailor, others suggested that somebody had been putting them in the pond. It was, in fact, quite a relief when they were out of hearing again, and reached the high road without seeing the doctor coming along in the distance, as their fears had pictured.

Arrived at the playground, they at once separated, joining themselves to various parties at play there. About ten minutes afterwards the Doctor himself came in, and seemed to take exact notice of all the boys in the playground and field adjoining. But nothing else was done. However, a letter soon afterwards arrived from a gentleman at Winterham, who, having seen some lads going into the 'Laurel Tree,' and apparently spending some time inside, thought well to send their schoolmaster notice of the fact. Armed with these two circumstances, Dr. Swanage spoke openly to the school on the subject, and warned all such offenders of the results likely to ensue if these habits were continued.

His words had such an effect on Baylis, that for a week he refused to go with the Sharps to Winterham. 'I know what it is,' said the elder; 'you're afraid of what old Swanage said.'

'No, I'm not; I'm not afraid of anything.'

'Well, then, come to-day. Martin says he wonders you haven't been, especially as he has been so jolly kind in letting you have what you want on tick.'

This was a new view of the question. He saw that Martin had now a kind of hold upon him, and could almost demand his presence unless he could pay. There seemed no way out of his difficulty, except to do as he was wished until such a time as he could pay his debt. There was no chance of that being done during the term then running, for he was really penniless. But on coming back the next term he might hope to pay off Martin, and then he would go to the 'Laurel Tree' no more. He had taken no account of his debt, but did not think that it could amount to more than about fifteen shillings. That sum would be quite within his means on return, but would certainly cramp him during the term. With this resolution he went off to Martin's with a lighter heart than he had had for some time. Thinking it better to settle this matter at once, he sought the inn-keeper, and asked for his account.

'Well,' said Martin, 'I don't quite know what it comes to now. Did you want to pay to-day?'

'Well, no; the fact is, I shall not be able to manage it till next term.'

'Next term? Oh, you must; you can't keep an honest tradesman out of his money like that.'

'You can't get your money unless I have it to pay you.'

'Well, it don't suit me to have my money standing idle all that time. If there's a long bill against you for another six weeks, you must pay for the accommodation, that's all.'

'Oh, I don't mind that,' said Baylis, anxious to get out of the difficulty; 'you put down so much as interest, and it will be all right.'

'Very good,' said Martin; 'I'll tot up your score, and send it up to you by a boy, unless you are in here to-morrow.'

This sounded something like a threat. But he did not go. The day after, a dirty boy sought him out in the playground, and gave him an equally dirty letter. He opened it, and found Mr. Martin's account.

It came to two pounds five shillings for games and refreshments, with half-a-crown added as interest.

(To be continued.)



Martin helping Green into the Copper.



The Two Parties engaged in Combat.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 335.)

CHAPTER XIII.



WHEN Baylis saw the amount of the bill sent in by Martin, he took it at once to the elder Sharp.

'Look here, what that swindler Martin has sent me—a bill for two pounds seven and sixpence! I don't believe I had more than ten shillings worth owing. It's a regular plant.'

'Ah,' said Sharp, 'but these things mount up so. Have you kept any account yourself?'

'No.'

'Then I don't see how you can cry out against him.'

'But don't I tell you it couldn't have been half that amount?'

'Yes, but telling me won't make it so.'

'What am I to do?'

'Pay it, I suppose.'

'I can't even next term. There won't be enough money for that when I have paid some other things owing.'

'Then you had better agree with Martin to pay it off bit by bit. He wouldn't mind that, I don't suppose, if you give him some security.'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, if you were to leave your watch in his hands just for form's sake, you know, he would do it for you.'

'But they would want to know at home what I had done with it.'

'Pooh, you are not obliged to pull out a watch when they are looking, and you could wear your chain just the same as usual.'

'I'll think it over,' said Baylis.

'Oh, yes, do. I'm only giving you the best advice I can, you know.'

'Yes, I know; it's awfully kind, but I feel in a regular fix.' And so indeed he was. That Martin was swindling him he felt quite certain. But then he knew, and the wily inn-keeper knew also, that to reveal the matter to Dr. Swanage might result in expulsion or in some punishment. Baylis had no doubt but that the threat of telling the Doctor would soon be held over his head if payment was not made.

Poor boy! He now felt keenly the loss of his friends. Sharp, he confessed, had been very kind, but was not quite a real chum. If he could only have had somebody who would have sympathised with his difficulties and helped him over them! Once he thought of asking Leslie's advice, but, remembering his rudeness towards the sixth-form boy when he had once before given him some counsel on this very point, he felt ashamed to speak. And so the last day of that term came, and this load still lay upon his spirits.

How light-hearted the other fellows seemed! In the bitterness of his spirit he almost hated them,

because they were merry whilst he felt dragged down by this hateful debt. He had no inclination to join in the fun which always marked the last night of the term. He only wanted to be left alone—that was what he told himself.

But the other sleepers in that room having no such obstacles in their paths, were resolved to spend the evening in the traditional way of St. Egbert's.

After tea, which was a rather disorderly meal, the whole body moved into the long schoolroom. It was summer, and the evening sun shed a soft light over the room as the troop of boys burst in. Even the noble youths of the sixth showed themselves on this occasion to be of the same nature as the younger lads around them.

First they sang an old song on the pleasures of going home which school-boys have used for some centuries. Then Dunstan made a speech, during which he was much cheered. Then Leslie proposed a vote of thanks to the eleven and others who had upheld the dignity of the school, and cheers for the master concluded the gathering.

But the third and fourth went upstairs to their room; they were all, with few exceptions, disinclined for bed. Presently the rival claims of Reds and Blues came up, and in less time than it takes to mention it the two parties were engaged in deadly combat. Pillows flew about in all directions; two-handed blows from well-stuffed bolsters laid many warriors low, and one or two were successfully entangled in sheets and led away captive to the enemy's corner.

Now it happened that the younger Sharp had made himself very disagreeable to the other small boys in the room, and some of them took advantage of the fray to seek him out. The two Sharps had always gone to bed whenever a tumult was threatened, and on this occasion they saw particular reason to act in this way. However, the Red youngsters, headed by Milsom and Choundy, forced their way to the younger Sharp's bed, and disregarding all his cries, pulled him from its shelter.

'I'll tell my brother!' yelled the victim.

'Yah—he's looking after himself,' cried Milsom, who saw the elder Sharp prostrate at the other end of the room, having undergone a similar course of treatment.

Poor little Sharp was at once dragged to the Red corner of the room and there placed amongst the prisoners. Choundy was told off to keep guard over him whilst the other captors returned to the attack.

Whilst the battle was at its height, and prodigies of valour with pillow and bolster were being performed on either side, the door opened, and Bruin Grant, accompanied by Carter and another fifth-form boy, rushed into the room. They had armed themselves with knotted towels, evidently with the intention of belabouring their enemies whilst they lay in bed.

On seeing the active state of things prevailing they stopped short, in doubt as to what should be done.

The two Sharps seeing their hesitation, cried from their corner, 'Grant! Grant! Beat off these fellows and make them leave us alone!'

Grant, seeing that Baylis, Freckles, and some others who were opposed to his authority, were evidently

amongst their opponents, charged down in their direction, slashing right and left with the towels.

A word or two passed between the leading spirits of the room, and then Baylis cried, 'Down with the bullies!'

With this he and Freckles rushed at Bruin, whilst Baylis, Tosstop, and some others, made for the other invaders. At the same moment Battersley shut the door, and moved a bedstead against it.

'Give it to the young beggars!' cried the valiant Bruin.

But as the words left his mouth somebody tripped him up, and he fell heavily to the ground. On trying to rise he found two stout lads seated in an easy but determined manner on his back. Two others he found had seized each an arm, and he was powerless.

'Let me go, you young beggars!' he cried.

But nobody paid any attention to his demands, beyond thrusting his arms behind him and proceeding to make them fast there with pocket-handkerchiefs.

'Carter! Coulson!' he gasped.

But, on twisting his neck in their direction, he saw that his two companions were in the same doleful plight as himself. Carter had apparently made a more desperate resistance, since his body was scarcely to be seen for the number of youngsters who had cast themselves upon it. And the whole roomful, with two or three exceptions, were laughing with fiendish glee over their new prisoners. All differences between Blues and Reds had now vanished before the common desire to punish the bullies.

Resistance was soon over, and the three invaders lay upon the ground, securely tied hand and foot.

'What shall we do now?' asked Tosstop, as he rolled the helpless Bruin over on to his back.

'Let us have them outside in the corridor,' suggested one boy.

'No,' said Tom; 'they would soon roll off to their room.'

'I have it,' said Freckles; 'we'll try them!'

'Agreed!' cried a dozen voices.

Accordingly the prisoners were raised to their feet and placed upright against the wall; Freckles, seated upon a pile of pillows on his bed, was Judge, Tosstop undertook to be counsel for the prosecution, Choundy and Baylis acted as gaolers, and the rest of the company were to be the jury.

'Prisoners at the bar,' said the judge.

'Oh, yes, you go on,' began Bruin.

'I beg,' said the judge, interrupting him, 'that there will be no levity.'

'Levity be blowed!' said Carter: 'you just undo these handkerchiefs, or it will be the worse for you.'

'Silence!' cried the judge with great fierceness. 'The counsel for the prosecution will now address the court.'

'Hear hear!' cried this disorderly jury.

Little Tosstop rose with great gravity, having thrown a counterpane gracefully around his shoulders in order to give more dignity to his appearance. Clearing his throat he began in an impressive undertone,—

'May it please your lordship, and gentlemen of the jury; unaccustomed as I am to—'

'Stow that nonsense!' cried Coulson, 'or I'll make it hot for you some day.'

'Unaccustomed as I am,' continued Tosstop, unmoved by the threat, 'to public speaking, I yet feel it my duty to address you on this painful occasion. I feel, I feel—'

'Do you!' said Carter, ironically; 'I'll make you feel still more to-morrow.'

'I feel that a great weight is being thrown upon me, and—'

But he had scarcely finished his sentence when a quite unexpected weight was thrown upon him, for Bruin staggered a step or two forward, before the gaolers could interfere, and literally fell upon his accuser.

When the prosecuting counsel had struggled to his feet, and Bruin had once more been dragged to the dock, Tosstop began again.

After two or three words he was surprised and pleased to see the eyes of all before him suddenly become fixed, all jeers and whispers ceased, and a most impressive silence ensued. At first he put this change down to his own eloquence, but presently he felt bound to look around, and then he saw to his amazement Dr. Swanage and Mr. Wilkins standing just within the room. Nobody moved until the Doctor spoke.

'To your beds, every one of you. I shall inquire into this to-morrow. But what are you doing here, Grant and Carter and Coulson, out of your room at this hour?'

The prisoners at the bar hung their heads in dismal silence.

'Go to your own room,' said the Doctor, with quiet dignity.

'Please, sir——' began Grant.

'Not a word, I won't have it. Off at once.'

'But, please, sir——'

'Do you hear me, sir? Get away to your own room. To-morrow shall see this business thoroughly examined. Now go.'

'Please, sir,' began Carter, thinking to clear up the cause of their new disobedience.

Dr. Swanage seemed turned to stone at this most extraordinary obstinacy on the part of his scholars.

'Will you do as I tell you?' he asked again.

'We can't,' said Grant, sulkily.

'I'll soon make you, sir,' said the Doctor, stepping forward.

But a closer inspection showed him the real state of affairs. At his bidding Tosstop and some others released the prisoners, who were at once marched off to their own room, with the promise of a full inquiry into the causes which brought them out of it at that hour.

'I also intend knowing what the boys in this room mean by barring their door, and so making it almost impossible for their master to enter. I am determined to stop this riotous conduct.'

The guilty parties looked very foolish at this announcement, but consoled themselves with the thought that, as the morrow was breaking-up day, it would not be possible to punish them severely.

Their expectation was quite realised. The Doctor's anger cooled during the night, and he was ready to look upon the scene as a natural incident of the last night at school of that term. The only persons upon



"Only a glass of Cider."

whom he was severe were the three elder boys, who had violated an express rule by leaving their own bedroom and entering another. They were, however, let off with a warning as to the punishment likely to follow any such act in the future.

The lively scenes of the previous evening had to some extent drawn Baylis out of his prevailing gloom; but, when the excitement was over, he went back again to the old state. What pleasure was he likely to get from a holiday with that horrible debt hanging over him? It was no good, he could never raise the sum, and so exposure was bound to ensue; then what would they say at home? Such thoughts were not to be shaken off, and a settled gloom once more took possession of him. Instead of going by the same train as several other lads from his own part of the country, he chose to leave by a later one, in order to have no company.

When Battersley said 'Good-bye,' he evidently

wished to add something: but Baylis turned coldly away, and so lost one more chance of renewing the old friendship.

(To be continued.)

'ONLY A GLASS OF CIDER.'

IT was only a glass of cider,
From the hands of a fair young girl!
How could he decline the kindness?
She would deem him a mannerless churl.

It was only a glass of cider,
But it kindled anew the flame
Which had burned up his noble manhood,
And left him in grief and shame.

He had broken away from the tempter,
He stood on the rock again.



Bad Language.

No longer the penniless drunkard—
He stood a man among men.

When 'only a glass of cider'
Threw open the gates again
To a pathway of pain and sorrow,
To a death of hopeless pain.

BAD LANGUAGE.

FEW things distress a good man more than the bad language he sometimes hears from the lips of labouring men. As he passes outside a beer-shop he is surprised to hear the expressions which are con-

stantly made use of by men and boys, who nevertheless are not altogether unacquainted with the inside of the parish church and the parish school. Surely this is one of those evil practices that we should all strive resolutely to put down? Especially should we strive to teach the young the wickedness and folly of it. As a wise man has well said, 'Bad language gratifieth no sense, yieldeth no profit, procureth no honour, the sound of it is not melodious. When did any man ever get an estate by it? Surely of all dealers in sin, the man who uses bad language is the silliest, and makes the worst bargain for himself, for he sins gratis and sells his soul for nothing.'



A MIDNIGHT ALARM.

WHEN I was a young girl, I lived for several years with my uncle and aunt in India. During this period we visited more than one part of the country, as our residence, of course, depended on the quarters of my uncle's regiment, and at the time of which I write my aunt and I had accompanied him to Pashur, a small station on the Afghan frontier, where he had been sent with a detachment of men to help to quell some disturbances amongst the tribes of the neighbourhood. There was really no very great danger connected with the affair, but there was a certain amount of risk and excitement which lent what I then thought a charming spice of romance and adventure to our position. The very strictest discipline was enforced amongst the men on sentry duty, and even at our own place, for we had a bungalow apart from the officers' quarters, the house-servants kept an armed watch at night, and a very keen look-out during the day; for the hostile natives had made more than one assault upon the station, carrying off some horses and other valuable property, and even attacking and wounding more than one of those who had withstood their depredations.

This being the state of affairs, it was greatly against his will that my uncle left my aunt and myself alone, when, shortly after we had arrived at the station, he was ordered away on a few days' absence to a considerable distance. Before he left he gave us many warnings and instructions. We were enjoined to attend ourselves to the fastening of doors and windows, to see that the men kept proper watch at night, and to take every possible trouble to ensure our own safety and that of our belongings. This we did, and for two days after Uncle Lidyard left, nothing happened to give us the slightest alarm. Indeed, we both rather enjoyed the fun of this playing at a siege, as we called it, until on the night of the third day something occurred which made us think that a little less excitement and a little more commonplace security would be a change in our position which we should welcome.

We had made our rounds as usual, and had retired for the night, but instead of going at once to bed I had loitered about with a book in my own room, so that when I did at last lie down to rest it was between twelve and one in the morning. Scarcely had I laid my head on the pillow when I was startled by hearing the sound of voices whispering quite close to the veranda which rang along the outside of the corridor in which all our bedrooms lay. I sat up at once to listen, and I thought I could distinguish the sound of stealthy footsteps pressing on the ground. I need not say that my heart beat more loudly at that moment than it had ever done in my life before, and two minutes did not elapse before I had thrown on my dressing-gown and was running quickly along the corridor from one room to another till I reached my aunt's apartment.

'Aunt!' I exclaimed, as I opened the door, 'Aunt Lidyard, there are robbers round the house!'

'Nonsense, child!' she said; but she jumped up at once and slipping on her dressing-gown, went over to the window to listen. I saw her face just beginning to change as if her ear had caught some sound, when the door suddenly opened again and in burst Willis, her maid, with a face of the utmost dismay.

'Oh, ma'am!' she cried; 'oh, Mrs. Lidyard, there's a gang of black men round the house! I heard them myself whispering as if they're up to no good! Oh, ma'am, we shall all be killed and murdered like rats in a hole!'

'Now, Willis,' said my aunt, who although she was only a few years older than myself, was exceedingly cool and courageous; 'whatever is going to happen, crying and screaming will do no good; what we have got to do is to find out first whether there is anything to cry and scream about.'

As is usual in India, the glass doors and windows of the room were all covered outside at night with padded curtains, so that there was no good trying to see through them; but higher up in the wall than the ordinary window there was a second small square one, and to this Aunt Lidyard now turned her attention.

'Come along, Laura,' she said to me, 'we must manage to look through there.'

We dragged a table underneath, set a chair upon the top of it and a stool again on the top of that. On this impromptu ladder I, as the youngest of the party, was now requested to mount. So up I clambered till I stood upon the stool, Aunt Lidyard kneeling on the table and steadying my feet with her hands, while Willis clung desperately to the skirt of her dressing-gown, to gain, I suppose, a sense of protection by being near somebody. Had any one entered the room at that moment, we would have furnished them with an amusing spectacle. When I think of it now, it always puts me in mind of the ass, the dog, and the cock, in Grimm's Fairy Tales, who all perched themselves up on the top of each other to gaze through the window at the robbers' feast. But at the time, I can assure you, it was no laughing matter, for our hearts were in our mouths and I shook so violently that I could scarcely balance myself on the top of the stool.

Peering through the little window I could see one or two dusky figures fitting about in the darkness, and I certainly did hear more than one voice speaking in lowered accents.

'There are certainly some blacks there,' I reported; 'but what can our own men be about that they are so quiet?'

'Never trust to native servants,' replied my aunt; 'as likely as not they would set off as soon as the others appeared. We must go and see.'

And after helping me down from my post of observation, she resolutely lifted a lamp and made for the door. I admired her courage and I strove to imitate it, but it was in a very tremulous state of mind that I followed her out into the corridor. We went through room after room till we reached the door at the very end which led into the open air. Just outside this, one of our men was always stationed with firearms. We opened the door and found that the man was gone.

Our worst suspicions were now confirmed. Our men had evidently either been quietly overpowered by our wily visitors, or, as Aunt Lidyard suggested, had made off at the first appearance of danger. What were we to do?

There was not a European servant in the house except Willis, for uncle's own man had been obliged to go with him; we had not the courage to cross over the little court to where the rest of the native servants were, and, indeed, in all probability they had gone with the others; and so here we were, 'three unprotected females,' as Willis would have said, alone in a small, slightly-built bungalow, with not another house near enough to be of any good, and at the mercy of a number of cruel, remorseless savages (for one can call them nothing else), who would think as little of putting an end to us as we should of killing a family of flies.

'We can at least die hard,' said my aunt, and she began to fasten up the door. Just then we heard a noise as of something heavy being dragged over the ground at the end of the house.

'They are coming,' we both cried out, and rushed wildly back to the room in which we had left Willis, and with her help barricaded up the two doors with all the furniture we could lay our hands upon; and then, in fear and trembling, we all three sat down and prepared for the worst.

The dreadful thought now struck my aunt that the men were going to set fire to the house; but, to our astonishment, minute after minute passed and nothing happened. We could hear not a sound, and waiting on in the death-like stillness was terrible.

'Anything would be better than this,' said Aunt Lidyard at last; 'I must go out and face whatever is coming,' and, after pulling aside our barricade she once more went along towards the end of the corridor; Willis and I both followed. Again my aunt opened the door, and judge of our astonishment when we saw our own servant standing outside keeping watch, as if nothing had ever taken him away from the spot for a moment.

'What has all the noise been, Poonah?' cried my aunt, as soon as she was able to speak, for all three of us felt as if we were in a dream.

And then the explanation burst upon us.

Uncle Lidyard, who was very fond of carpentry, had been amusing himself before he left by building some new sort of trap which he had fancied. This vehicle had been left standing in the courtyard, and as a heavy shower of rain came on in the middle of the night the servants, who had more regard for our property than we had given them credit for, had dragged it under cover that the wood might not be spoiled by the damp. This was the occasion of all the whispering and noise.

'We might have thought of that,' said Aunt Lidyard, as she turned to go back to her room; 'what fools we have been!'

'Better to be fools than corpses,' came in a grim voice from Willis. But my aunt looked as if she could not agree with her; for of all things she hated being laughed at, and there was certainly something comical in the amount of energy and courage we had summoned up to face what, after all, was a purely imaginary enemy.

We found, however, that by a curious coincidence, what had given us a false alarm, had very likely at the same time saved us from a real danger.

The next day the station was in the greatest state of excitement, for the people in the next bungalow to ours had had every horse they possessed stolen during the night by a set of the hostile natives.

On investigating the affair, the footsteps of the robbers were traced back to our house and past it across the frontier. There could be no doubt, from the amount of footprints around our precincts, that the robbery had been planned for our bungalow, and that the noise the men had made bringing in the trap, and the lights we had lit in our fright had had something to do with sending on our would-be visitors to the next place.

When Uncle Lidyard came back he was greatly amused with the account of our fright, and never ceases to tease us about our extraordinary display of courage and coolness when no foes were near.

But my aunt and I maintain, that as we really thought the men were there our courage and coolness were quite as great as if they had been displayed at the siege of Lucknow, or in any other dangerous and terrible situation.

R. M. M.

JACK THE SHEEP-DOG.

JACK is a Sussex sheep-dog of the old-fashioned type. In place of the long, silken, brushlike tail and handsome black-and-tan hair so much prized by collie fanciers of the present day. Jack has only a short stump, and his coat is a tangled mat of black and white, crisply curled, woolly-like substance, that resembles a piece of worn-out carpet more than anything else; but the good old dog's qualities do not lie in his appearance. One look in his honest face is enough to show that he has an amount of intelligence far above the average of most dogs. In fact I hardly know how they would get along without him at the farm in Sussex where he lives.

Jack's duties are numerous enough, but he has certain ones that have originated entirely with himself. He makes periodical rounds of the farm-building and stack-yard several times during the night, but never barks unless there is real occasion for it. Should a fox, of which there are many about, come prowling near the fowl roosts, you hear a deep growl, and if light enough you may see Jack chasing Reynard across the meadow; but if tramps or poachers come near the place, he then barks furiously till some one comes to inquire what the matter may be. One of his self-imposed duties is to trot round the hedges and orchard in the morning and search for stray eggs which the fowls persist in laying in out-of-the-way places; when he finds one he sits down and gives short barks until one of the children come and remove it. With all his work, he is kind and affectionate, and by no means averse to a gambol with any one he knows; but when business is going on, either collecting sheep, pigs, or cattle, or searching for eggs, Jack will take no notice of you; you may call him, but he turns a deaf ear to all invitations. He is on duty, and until that is finished he will attend to nothing else.



Jack driving in the Brindled Heifer. By HARRISON WEIR.

That Jack is very intelligent the following anecdote will prove. The cattle of the farm are driven each morning to one field or another, and Jack merely goes as far as the gate, turning them in; when evening comes he is simply told to 'Fetch 'em, Jack,' and, the gate being opened, he soon collects and brings them home. Well, one morning, a fine brindled cow was found dead in her stall; she was buried and the rest sent out to graze. Jack was very restless all day; sometimes he would run off to the meadow and look at the cows

as if counting them, then he would return to the farmyard and sniff about all the stalls. Evening came, and Jack went off to bring in the cows; and when he had once started them towards home, the cunning old fellow ran into a neighbouring field belonging to a gentleman whose cows were grazing there, selected a brindled heifer from that herd, and actually drove her to his master's yard, thereby making up his proper number, and seemed very much put out when she was driven back again.

O. W.



Shaving the Russians.



SHAVING THE RUSSIANS.

PETER THE GREAT, on his return to Moscow in 1699, after travelling through Germany, Holland and England, determined to make his Russian subjects look like Europeans; for at that time, in both appearance and manners, they resembled Asiatics. They were dressed in long robes reaching down to their ankles, gathered in folds at the waist, and girded by a belt or sash; the wealthier classes wearing garments of rich materials, lined with costly furs, and on their heads they wore a high cap with a fur border. They took a great pride in their long beards, which were combed out over their breasts; and they reckoned them not only an ornament to the face, but a distinction from the surrounding nations, who were all clean shaved.

Peter began his reforms by ordering all the boyars, or nobles, to appear at court in English dresses, on pain of his displeasure; and patterns of English coats were hung up at the gates of the city, and all persons passing through the gates in their long habits had to pay a tax, or else have their skirts cut round by the knees. The poor peasants alone were exempted from this rule. On the wearing of long beards a tax of one hundred roubles a-year was imposed; but this measure only increased the Czar's revenue, for the people willingly paid the money that they might retain their cherished beards. Even those who adopted the English dress refused to submit to an act that they thought not only irreligious but foolish. 'For why,' said they, 'deprive the chin of its natural covering, in a climate where the protection of fur collars was necessary during six months in the year?'

So, finding taxes and fines useless, the Czar resolved to convert his subjects to the new fashions by force.

At the gates of the city barbers were stationed, and all, except the peasants, who were allowed to retain their beards, were obliged to submit to a rapid shaving, in spite of entreaties and the offer of large bribes. And venerable grey beards might be seen scampering through the streets, pursued by the barbers, whom they fled from as they would from hangmen; and when caught the poor runaways frequently lost skin, as well as hair, in this rough way of shaving. The barbers were most likely Germans, or English, and probably enjoyed the panic they caused among the Russians. Shaving had been at one time pronounced a crime by the clergy, and a beard was looked on as a sign of orthodoxy; so that native barbers would have got but little custom. Those Russians who persisted in wearing their long caftans were obliged to kneel down, and their garments were cut off at the knees. Peter sometimes invited the nobles to his table, and had them shaved in his presence; a process that some of them resisted, their faces suffering in consequence.

One day, when the Czar was out walking, he met an old man coming from the barbers. Peter spoke kindly to him, telling him that now he had lost his

beard he looked like a young man. Upon this the old man put his hand into his bosom, and drawing forth the beard that had been cut off, and showing it to the Czar, told him that he should preserve it, and have it placed in his coffin, that in the next world he might show it to St. Nicholas, to prove that he was a true Russian!

Peter did not confine his reforms to the men's habits; he also changed the dress of the Russian ladies: but though the new costume may have been more convenient, it was certainly not so quaint or picturesque as the old one. The ladies of Russia lived in Oriental seclusion, seldom appearing in public, and having a separate part of the house appropriated to them; but the Czar ordered that at all festivities, or public entertainments, women should be invited as well as men, but that they must all appear in English dresses.

Whether all of Peter's changes in costume were for the better may be doubted; for before his time stays were unknown in Russia; and when he first visited the German Court, and was dancing with the ladies, he mistook their whale-bone corsets for their bodies, and complained that the German ladies had such hard bones!

A. R.

NEW ORLEANS.

AS the English city of York has its namesake in New York, so has the old French city of Orleans a namesake likewise in the great American Republic. And as Kings George and Charles gave their names to States, and the Virgin Queen Elizabeth is remembered in that of Virginia, so did one of the Kings of France stand godfather to the great Southern State of Louisiana.

New Orleans is the capital of this State. It is built in a sort of curve, and is called on that account 'the Crescent City.' It stands beside the 'Father of waters,' the grand Mississippi, which, after a course of more than 3000 miles, here pours its gathered treasures into the Gulf of Mexico.

The city is not healthy, for it is visited by bad air from marshy ground, and it is often much infested by yellow fever, or 'yellow Jack,' as the English sailors have named that dreadful visitor. Mosquitoes also make the hours of night miserable, unless you have provided net curtains for your bed. The streets are narrow, and the houses low, and many are built of wood.

The market is a most entertaining place, and filled with most splendid flowers, fruit, and vegetables. Strange animals, too, and birds of lovely colours, are here offered for sale. You meet people of all nations clad in the most varied dresses, and you cannot help being amused and delighted. But you must be up early, for all the business is over by nine o'clock in the morning. The meat you buy is still warm, for the poor animal has just been slaughtered. Do not purchase more than you need for the day's use, because it will not keep good. In a few hours what is left will become putrid.

Sunday is a very gay, unquiet day in New Orleans. The people go in crowds to hear morning mass in the Cathedral with four towers, and then they make haste to amuse themselves as much as they can.

The city was founded by Spaniards. Then the French became masters of it, and they sold it to the Americans for a large sum of money. We tried to capture it in 1812, but we lost a great number of men, and our General was killed. The Americans fought behind cotton bags, and lost very few.

The river is about nine hundred yards wide here, and above one hundred feet deep. A bank has been thrown up to prevent the town being inundated in high floods. On this bank is a fine promenade. The Mississippi is a truly noble river. It flows mostly through a flat wilderness, without mountain scenery; but many people think it one of the earth's grandest sights. As we stand and view the immense volume of muddy water rolling in majesty to the yet more majestic ocean, we feel strangely moved, and think we have never seen anything more sublime than the 'Father of waters,' ever passing onward to his destined haven, in whose immense bosom he is swallowed up and lost.

G. S. O.

JUVENILE AUTHORS.



AMONGST the famous men who have in childhood given promise of great talent, Pascal justly claims a place. When a boy of eleven he composed an elaborate *Treatise on Sound*, and in another year he had thoroughly mastered Euclid's *Elements of Geometry* without the aid of a teacher. At sixteen he had written a *Treatise on Conic Sections*, which excited the amazement of skilled mathematicians. Of Detrius it is recorded, that before he was twenty he had published a book on Seneca's works, in which quotations were made from 100,000 authors. Madame de Staël began to compose almost as soon as she could write. Grotius at the age of eight wrote verses which were worthy of praise apart from the youth of their deemed author. At thirteen, Cowley had published a volume of poems, some of which had been written when he was much younger. Macaulay was a writer of history before he had reached that age. A child named Thomas William Malkin, who died at the age of seven, is said to have learned the Greek alphabet, and made some progress in Latin when four years old. At the age of seven he composed verses, and a number of fables, in addition to writing the history of an imaginary country of which he supposed himself to be king.

A. R. B.

THE TOPER SAVED BY HIS DOG.

IT WAS autumn, and loud howled the raging blast,
Whirled the brown leaves and bent the oak's strong arms,

While, from earth's canopy, a deluge shower
And pitchy night—like a huge pall outspread—
Shrouded creation with its darkness o'er.

Midnight had passed, when from the tavern fire,
Before whose cheering blaze there long had sat,
In deep and late carouse, a crowd of drinkers,
A toper rose, and in his fitful whim,

Despite the fury of the elements,
He'd venture forth, and wend him to his home!

Calling his dog, a good and faithful friend,
Who came obedient to his master's voice,
He bade 'Good night,' and o'er the threshold passed.

His way lay by a deep and rapid brook,
O'er which a bridge of wood long time had stood,
A safe conveyance to the wayfarer;
But now the stream, fed by the watery storm,
Had swelled into a river, wild and strong,
And, in its headlong fury, torn away
This frail impediment to its rushing flood;
Yet, as if skilled in guile and treachery,
A few spared planks had left, in guise to lure
The traveller to the death that lurked beneath.

Arriving here, the toper onward pressed
The bridge to pass; and had he but advanced
Five paces more, the raging flood had claimed
The unsuspecting drunkard for his prey;
But now the faithful dog growled threateningly,
As if some lurking enemy lay near.
The staggering drunkard paused, then swaggering said,
'What ails the foolish beast? Pray, who's afraid?
Could I but see, I'd cudgel well the rogue,
For daring to dispute my right of way.
Some drunken fool, no doubt; ne'er heed him, boy.
Be quiet, sirrah!' Thus the toper said,
And motioned to advance him on his way.
Again the menace of the opposing brute
Was heard, and louder, as if more incensed,
And his bright, glaring eyes with fury gleamed,
And his rough coat erect all bristling rose,
And madness seem'd to have possessed him quite.

Once more to soothe the dog the man essayed,
And failing, raised the heavy staff he held
To force his path, and beat the dog aside.
But he, with sudden spring, avoids the blow,
And then, as suddenly, his master bore
Prone and extended to the soddened ground,
And strove to drag him from the bridge away!

Three times the man arose, and thus, three times
The dog withdraws him from the fatal pass,
Till, of the contest weary, and o'ercome,
His master yielded the disputed field,
And sullenly retraced his backward way.

When morning broke, again he sallied forth,
And on arriving at the spot where late
The faithful dog he'd left, there found he him
Before the ruined bridge—a sentinel!
Amazed he viewed his near escape from death,
By daylight shown in all its horror forth;
Tears dim his eyes, long time unused to weep.
With fond caress and words of grateful joy
Greets he his faithful dog, who, bounding, flew
To meet his master's well-known, watched-for step.
A new and sudden feeling seized the man,
And he who ne'er before had uttered prayer
For years bygone of wickedness and shame,
Spoke incoherently his praise to God.
Contrition seized upon his hardened heart,
And from that hour ne'er was he known to taste
The accursed spirit more!



STYBARROW CRAG.

STYBARROW CRAG is a picturesque spot about ten miles from Ambleside, on the road to Penrith. The rock only gives room enough for a carriage to pass between it and the lake of Ulleswater. Here, on one occasion, the Dalesmen of former days made a successful stand against a horde of Moss-troopers

who were making a raid on the district. The leader of the brave Dalesmen was afterwards styled the King of Patterdale, a title which was borne for many years by his descendants. Stybarrow is a very favourite subject for the pencil and brush of the artists who visit the lake scenery.



The Toper's Dog.

[Page 347.]

"When morning broke, again he sallied forth,
And on arriving at the spot where late

The faithful dog he'd left, there found he him
Before the ruined bridge—a sentinel!"

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 340.)

CHAPTER XIV.

HERE we are again!" cried Freckles, dismounting from a cab on a bright September day, the first of the new term. He was followed by Choundy, Knott, and one or two others who had arrived by the same train, and crowded into this particular cab.

"Is Tosstop come, Chips?" pursued Freckles.

"Well, sir, I think he is. I see somebody like him a-scouring round the playground jest now."

"All right, Chips; I'll go and find him."

Tosstop was found in the place indicated, and these two friends were soon united.

Baylis arrived early, and Battersley soon afterwards, but they had only exchanged a few words. The former came back with a forced air of liveliness which barely hid the anxiety he felt as to the result of the 'Laurel Tree' debt.

A large group of the third and fourth-form boys had a long kind of council on the grass in the cricket-field, telling stories of the past holidays, and talking over plans for the future. Tosstop had a long story to tell about Green, in whose company he had travelled some distance that morning. On arriving at a junction it was found that they were in that part of the train which did not go on to Winterham.

"You young gentlemen must get out," said the guard.

"Why?" asked Green. But the official had gone.

Tosstop collected his luggage and stepped on to the platform.

"All right," said Green, "you can get out if you like, I shan't; I'm not going to be taken in like that."

"But there's a junction here, and we are not in the Winterham part of the train."

"Aren't we? Well, all I can say is that when I got in here I expressly asked if this was the Winterham train, and the guard said "Yes." I shall stay."

"All right," said Tosstop; "I'll just mention it to the Doctor if you don't turn up to-day. So good-bye."

"What! you aren't going?"

"Yes, I don't want to be left behind."

Just then the engine gave a threatening snort, and Green, seizing his coat and bag, rushed headlong out and down the platform after Tosstop, stepping upon the favourite corns of two old gentlemen, and losing a good deal of his own skin by the violent contact of his legs with various packages on the way. In the course of this progress he missed Tosstop, and, not knowing what to do, dashed into the first open carriage in the hinder part of the train. It was empty, and he proceeded to settle himself very com-

fortably in one corner. Hardly had he done so when a porter thrust his head into the carriage.

'Where for, sir?'

'Winterham,' said Green.

'Wrong train, sir.'

Green darted out immediately, feeling certain that everything was trying hard to make him go wrong.

'Where is my train?'

'There, sir,' said the porter, pointing to the other side; 'it's just a-going off.'

Green darted away with the fury of a madman, and just reached the right train in time to be dragged on board by Tosstop, who was anxiously looking out for his arrival. During the rest of the journey he was not quite able to lose the idea that they had been deceived, and that the affair would end in their finding themselves fifty miles away from Winterham, with their luggage all gone in another direction.

There was a good deal of laughter at Green's adventures, which he took in a stolid way, not feeling quite certain whether it did not express a kind of admiration for his cautious habits.

Conversation next turned upon the events of the last term, and the probability of Bruin and his friends seeking to make up for their dishonourable defeat by some notable stroke of action. It was resolved, however, to stoutly resist any attempts at bullying, and to act together whenever possible. Unless Bruin was ready to fight for it he would find himself deprived of his prey in future.

Later on in the afternoon an opportunity occurred of showing him what the new state of things would be.

Little Knott was crossing the playground, flute in hand, and occasionally playing a snatch of some tune popular there, when Grant came behind, and tried to drag the instrument from his grasp.

Knott struggled to the best of his power.

'Give it up!' cried Bruin, twisting the owner's wrists.

'What for?' asked Knott.

'Because I want it. Will you give it up?'

Knott's answer was to shout at the top of his shrill voice, 'Help! help! Tosstop! Freckles! help!'

'All right,' said Bruin, 'yell away. Much good you'll get out of it. They'll get a jolly good hiding if they come here.'

The captive redoubled his cries, still clinging to his beloved old flute.

Presently Tosstop, Freckles, Battersley, Choundy, and some others were seen running in the direction of the pair.

Bruin saw them coming, and by a final effort wrenched the flute from the small boy's hands.

'Now, then,' he said, with a sneer, 'will you have it now or wait till you get it?'

Just then the reinforcements arrived, and Knott told his story. Bruin tried to walk off, but the whole party stood in his path. Tosstop made himself spokesman.

'Now then, give up that flute, bully.'

'Will you have it now, or wait till you've —'

He did not finish the sentence, for the whole party closed upon him at once. Seeing himself likely to get the worst of it, he flung the flute from him over the wall into the Doctor's garden.

'There's your flute; go and get it.'

'There's your hat; go and get it,' said Tosstop, and with that he flung Bruin's head-gear over the wall too.

How foolish the bully looked! Six or seven youngsters all standing around him, laughing at the top of their voices. What should he do? They evidently meant war, and Bruin's courage was never very abundant. He looked around the playground, and as no other big fellows were near he resolved to pocket the affront.

'Stand out of my way!' he said in a lordly manner, walking towards a gap in the circle around him.

'Won't you fetch your hat?' asked one.

'Aren't you afraid of catching cold?' asked another.

'Why not knot your handkerchief at the four corners and wear that?' suggested a third.

Bruin pretended not to hear these insults, and walked solemnly away. When the jeering party had gone off to spread the news of the victory, he began to think what would be the best course to pursue as to his hat. On such an afternoon it was not likely that many of the masters would be about. He therefore resolved to climb the wall, and drop into Dr. Swanage's garden in order to avoid the laughter which would soon greet his appearance bare-headed. The wall was not a difficult one to scale, but its top was adorned with a row of iron spikes, meant to deter the lads from practising climbing thereon.

Bruin carefully raised his head high enough to scan the garden. Nobody could be seen. He then drew himself up to the top, and got the lower part of his body over ready to drop.

Now it happened that whilst Bruin was making this attempt, Dr. Swanage's bull-terrier, Snaps, had been very carefully depositing in a secluded part of the garden some bones remaining from his dinner. Having finished this task, he was quietly trotting up a side-path, when his watchful eyes discovered a pair of human legs dangling over the wall. Snaps knew quite well that trowsers had no right to be in that position. He eyed them in a suspicious manner for a moment, and then, observing them to wriggle, he concluded that the time for action had arrived.

After one or two preliminary barks he made leap after leap, and at last fixed his teeth in one leg of the offending trowsers.

A loud yell arose from the alarmed Bruin, who convulsively drew up his legs to the top of the wall. This hasty movement caught his clothes in two of the obnoxious spikes, and kept him firmly fixed.

In the meantime Snaps was working himself into a terrible state of rage, flying at the top of the wall, and snapping his clean white teeth as though a choice morsel from Bruin was the kind of dish he most favoured. Whilst the wretched climber was still trying to clear himself from the spikes, a party of youngsters was seen coming in his direction.

At their approach he made frantic efforts to clear himself, but without any other effect than to produce a rending of cloth.

Having planted themselves within easy distance, the spectators at once opened fire.

'Shall I fetch a ladder?'

'Wouldn't you like to have your tea brought out, and drink it there?'

'Shall we see you at supper to-night?'

'Look out for the Doctor.'

Such were a few of the insulting remarks which fell upon Bruin's ear as he struggled on the top of the wall. But worse troubles were in store. Presently he heard a well-known voice calling off Snaps. The Doctor had arrived. Having put up his eye-glasses, and carefully surveyed the struggling figure, he said, 'Ah! it is you I see, Grant. Now will you be good enough to come down from my wall?'

'I can't, sir,' said Grant, making a desperate wriggle to prove the truth of his avowal.

'Ah!' said Dr. Swanage, gravely, 'the spikes are inconveniencing you, I am afraid.'

'Yes, sir,' was the meek response from the wall.

'Then I will send you some help.'

He walked away, but somehow forgot to call the eager Snaps to follow him, and as soon as the Doctor's back was turned his dog renewed the leaps at the strange wall-fruit just out of his reach.

It was some time before any signs of the promised help appeared; then Chips was seen to enter the playground, bearing a short ladder, and followed by about twenty boys who had just heard the news. He placed the ladder against the wall near the unfortunate Bruin, and then invited him to come down. But this was more easily said than done. Before Bruin could be moved, Chips had to release him from the spikes. Then, with downcast face and ragged clothes, he went across the playground. Nicholson was coming in at that very moment, having arrived but a few minutes before. He saw the ragged figure before him, but, not believing that he could be anybody claiming acquaintance with his lordly self, he turned away with an air of disdain. Now poor Bruin was just going to address him, hoping to enlist Nicholson's sympathy, and so obtain help from him in paying off this debt. And Nicholson cut him! Poor Bruin's cup was full. He dashed upstairs to the dormitory in order to change his clothes, and then retired into privacy for the rest of that day.

It was now a matter for the young heroes of the third and fourth to consider whether or not they were likely to be attacked in their own room that night, and if so, what their course of action was to be.

On the one hand it seemed only too probable that Bruin would seek to wipe away the stain of his recent defeat by a raid upon this room; on the other hand it seemed quite possible that he would seek to lull them into false security by keeping very quiet for a time. But the resolution arrived at by the leaders was that every preparation should be made for meeting any attack which might be made upon them.

Possibly Bruin knew of this resolution, for he seemed always to hear the latest news from the third and fourth. At all events, he did not propose the usual excursion to break in the new boys, and the evening passed over in quiet.

Baylis, without confessing to himself that he did so, in reality avoided the two Sharps. But they were not inclined to lose the company of almost the only boy in the school who would now be on friendly

terms with them, and soon sauntered up during the early hours of the evening.

'Halloa, Baylis, how do you find yourself?'

'Jolly, thanks,' was the reply, with a forced air of cheerfulness.

'Coming down to the 'Tree' again?'

'Well, I suppose I must.'

'Oh, yes; there's that coin owing, of course.'

'Yes,' said Baylis, in a doubtful tone.

'I suppose it will be settled?'

'I suppose so.'

'Oh, that will be all right. Shall we look in there on Wednesday afternoon?'

'Well —' began Baylis.

'What? Not afraid?'

'Afraid? Stuff! I was only going to ask who was going.'

(N.B. This was not true; an excuse had been on the tip of his tongue, but that abrupt suggestion of the elder Sharp at once put his half-formed resolution to flight.)

'Ah!' continued Sharp; 'now I dare say that new fellow, Clarkson, would join us. He came down in the train with me, and seemed to have some pluck in him.'

'All right. You ask him and any others you like, and I'll be there too.'

The elder Sharp soon found a chance of broaching this project to the new boy, Clarkson, who was also in the fourth form. He was a thin, bilious-looking lad, with an indolent look on his face, and a strange habit of twitching his under lip with his finger.

Sharp opened the conversation with the air of condescension so proper to a lad of one term's standing when speaking to a new boy.

'I say, Clarkson, I think you're game—eh?'

'Oh, yes, I'm game,' was the reply.

'You'll find it jolly dry at this place unless you look out for some lively way of passing an hour occasionally.'

'Ah! dare say.'

'Now what do you say to a quiet game of skittles at a little place called the "Laurel Tree" at Winterham?'

'The very thing!' cried Clarkson, thinking it only proper to agree with any proposal made by his senior.

'Come on Wednesday?'

'I don't mind. Any chance of getting into a row for it?'

'Not a bit.'

'Oh, that's all right then.'

'Baylis and one or two other fellows will be coming, and we shall be a jolly party.'

'Oh, that's all right then.'

In these words it was afterwards found that Clarkson always expressed his approval of any plan submitted to him.

'Know anything of skittles?' continued Sharp.

'Well, not much,' replied Clarkson, this being his way of confessing that he had never played before.

'You'll soon pick it up.'

And with this consoling sentence Sharp, having secured to himself the prospect of an afternoon's dissipation at little or no cost to himself, trudged off in search of some other victim.

(To be continued.)



Bruin on the top of the Wall.



Bessie's adopted Baby.

BESSY'S ADOPTED BABY.



BESSY is our favourite spaniel; she generally presents us with six or seven little Bessies in miniature twice a-year, which, I am sorry to say, are all obliged to be killed because she is such a bad mother. I think she would be good if her baby puppies were allowed to live in the dining-room, but as this cannot be they are put away as quickly as possible.

We have a very beautiful black and white cat; she presented us with three kittens about the same time as Bessy with puppies last year. Strange to say pussy di-liked one little kitty, and did not feed it properly; the others were stout and sleek, but this little wretched animal was miserably thin. As soon as the kittens were big enough to run, black pussy might be seen with the two favourites having many a fine game, but woe to the 'ugly duckling,' as we called the little, old fashioned, thin Kitty.

One day I wanted Bessy, to take her for a walk. I could not find her, so I thought I would look in her hutch, and there she was; but to my amazement not alone, but nursing pussy's 'ugly duckling.' Evidently Bessy was as much gratified as Kitty, for she wagged her tail and would not leave the kitten.

From that time Bessy took the greatest care of Kitty; let it sleep with her, and in every way treated it as if it was a real puppy and herself a good mother. It was a great wonder to most people; I certainly had seen a picture in some old book of a dog bringing up a kitten, but I never witnessed it before.

The kitten thrived beautifully, but she was wild, and not at all well behaved.

Her end was sad. An old servant of ours had taken a great dislike to her, and one day, in the little wild thing's eagerness to get away from my sister, it sprang into a tub of water, and Mary did not rescue it in time. We all felt sorry, for we were very anxious to see what sort of cat Bessy's adopted kitty would have grown up.

M. B.

A USEFUL TREE.

PROMINENT amongst the valuable trees of New Zealand is the Kauri Pine. These trees sometimes grow to a height of 150 feet, with a diameter of four or five yards. The wood is very prettily marked or mottled, which causes it to be in demand for cabinet making, and greatly enhances its value. A Kauri-tree, only forty feet high and thirty-seven in circumference, when sawn up, yielded 22,000 feet of good timber, which was sold for 500*l.*, leaving a clear profit to the owner of 300*l.* The wood is also used for ship-building, and other purposes for which strength is required. Unfortunately, the tree will not grow south of the thirty-seventh degree of latitude, so that, although plentiful near Auckland, it is quite unknown in many parts of the colony. A. R. B.

ROASTING A BEAR.



MY Uncle Randolph was a Canadian by birth, and spent the greater portion of his life in the backwoods of Canada; felling down trees and lopping off the branches during the winter, and in the spring, when the ice and snows were melted, floating the logs down stream. Frequently have I heard him tell of the privations and hardships of the lumberers, when, as is too often the case, they have fallen short of provisions; and particularly of the contrivances of himself and a fellow-lumberer, when they were once lost for several weeks in the pine swamps on the banks of the St. John's river.

Rifle they had none, and imitating the Indians, they manufactured for themselves bows and arrows, using for bow-strings thongs of leather, which they cut in strips from their buckskin garments. When it was impossible to procure game, in order to sustain life, they were obliged to boil the inner bark of the slippery elm and other palatable barks to jelly; and when water could not be obtained, they drank the sap of the sugar maple, and often melted snow. At last they were reduced to such a strait that they even boiled their own moccasins.

After spending several days with nothing more substantial to support life than the inner scrapings of the barks of different trees,—which was certainly not very satisfying food for strong, hearty men—they encamped one night in the heart of a thick, dark swamp.

It was not precisely the spot which they would have chosen for a camping-ground, but the situation was unavoidable. They had been enticed into it by the tracks of a deer or moose, which, notwithstanding the exertions of a whole day's pursuit, they had not succeeded in capturing.

Night came upon them unawares, and resolving to make the best possible out of a cheerless situation, my uncle and his companion set to work to make a fire,—determined to have warmth without, if not within—which was accomplished by the aid of a flint and a steel knife. Using for a foundation the huge trunk of a hollow old pine-tree which lay prostrate on the ground, and which was already half buried in fallen branches, they piled heaps of boughs around and above it; and the wood being mostly dry pine, cedar, and birch, it crackled and roared away splendidly.

When the pile had at last become somewhat diminished through the fierce ravages of the fire, the two men began to collect fresh fuel with which to feed the flames. Whilst thus engaged, suddenly there fell upon their ears a terrible growling noise, which appeared to proceed from the depths of the blazing pile. The startled men, dropping instantly their armfuls of firewood, waited in horror for a repetition of the dreadful sound.

The growls increased in number and volume, and presently, to their great terror and astonishment, an enormous black head protruded from the butt end of the hollow trunk upon which the blazing boughs

were heaped. And in another moment the form of a huge black bear burst out from the log and dashed through the flames. But, quick as was the bound, the flames had caught his shaggy coat, which was instantly in a blaze.

The situation was an exciting and alarming one to the two men, having no weapons wherewith to combat the enemy. Maddened with pain and rage, the bear made a dash towards them; each of them, seizing a stout club, prepared to defend himself. But the bear blinded with smoke, and therefore unable to see them, was soon overcome by the attack made on him.

Bruin had probably laid himself up in the hollow pine for the winter, and the heat of the fire penetrating to the innermost recesses of his snug lair, had rudely awakened him from his slumber and obliged him to retreat from his comfortable quarters.

The men quickly stripped off his skin and made a welcome supper of roast bear's flesh; and besides, they had meat enough to last them for many days. At the end of that period, having wandered eastward through the forest, they came upon a lumberer's camp. After being sheltered and fed for a day and night, the two journeyed onward, and at length reached their destination in safety.

But my uncle considered the roasting of a bear such a good story, that he told it on all possible occasions till the day of his death.

THE STORY OF THESEUS.

ÆGEUS, the father of Theseus, hid a sword and a pair of shoes under a very large stone, which was not to be moved until his son was man enough to roll it away. When he was grown-up, his mother led him to the stone, which he moved with the greatest ease. His mother then told him that he was to go to Athens, where his father was then living; but she begged him to go by sea, because the land journey was very dangerous.

Theseus, however, was fired with the desire of doing something for the world to talk about. So, girding on the good sword which had lain idle so long under the stone, he made his way on foot to Athens. He fought and killed a club-bearer, and then he slew Sinnis, a cruel wretch called the Pine-bender. This man used to bend two pines, and tie unhappy passengers to the top branches, which, suddenly returning to their places, tore them in pieces. Having done to Sinnis what he had so often done to others, Theseus next killed a fierce wild sow, and, after that, he hurled the robber Sciron from a precipice. Sciron well deserved his fate, for he used to make people wash his feet, and while they were doing it, he suddenly pushed them into the sea.

Another cruel tyrant he rid the land of, namely, Procrustes, who had a bed on which he made his miserable captives lie down. If their legs were too long, he sawed them off; and if they were too short, he stretched them to the proper length.

When Theseus reached Athens, that city was in great disorder. A clever, bad woman, named Medea,

had great influence over King Ægeus, and she persuaded him to poison the famous young stranger, whose deeds were on every tongue. Theseus was invited to a royal banquet, and a cup of deadly wine was set near his plate. But, before he sat down to eat and drink, Theseus drew his sword from its sheath, and his father recognised both it and him. Dashing the poisoned cup to the ground, Ægeus embraced his son, and made him his heir.

This preference angered some people, and caused a civil war. In this war Theseus defeated his father's enemies with his wonted bravery, and then he slew the great bull which roamed on the field of Marathon, doing much mischief.

But the greatest feat of Theseus was the deliverance of his country from a dreadful tribute exacted by Minos, king of Crete.

Minos, having made successful war on Athens, would not allow that city any peace unless the Athenians would send to Crete, every ninth year, seven young men and seven maidens, to be food for a monster called the Minotaur.

Theseus, volunteered to go as one of the seven young men, much to his father's grief. The sail of the ship that carried him and the other victims away was quite black, as most suitable for such a melancholy journey. A white sail was provided also, and Theseus promised he would have it hoisted on their return, if all went well.

In due time the ship ran into harbour at Crete, and here Theseus was so lucky as to meet a young lady, named Ariadne, who gave him a clue of silk, by means of which he was able to find his way about the labyrinth with ease. In course of time the Minotaur was slain, the Cretan ships scuttled, and the party of Athenians, together with Ariadne, returned home.

Unfortunately, Theseus was so full of his lady-love, and the sailors so overjoyed, that no one remembered to hoist the white sail. Poor old Ægeus was on the rocks, looking out for the ship, and when he saw the black sail, he thought, 'My son is dead, and life is no longer of any value;' and so he threw himself into the sea, which has ever since been called the Ægean Sea.

Athens was stirred by sorrow and joy at these events, some lamenting the good king's death, others rejoicing over dear children spared a horrible fate. Theseus reproached himself bitterly for his carelessness about the sail: and having buried his father, he made the people a commonwealth, set up the Isthmian games, and did so much for his city that it passed into a proverb, 'Nothing without Theseus.'

But the people of Athens treated their great men badly, for they were always afraid they would domineer over them. They behaved so ill to Theseus that he left them and went to Scyros, the king of which place threw him down the rocks in a fit of jealousy.

When search was made, long afterwards, for the bones of Theseus, they were found in a spot where an eagle was scratching up the earth with its talons. The seekers dugged there, and found a coffin, wherein were the bones of a very big man, and by them lay a lance and a sword, which very few were able to wield.

G. S. O.



HALF-MAST HIGH.

WITH silver gleam the moon's soft beam
 Fell on the sleeping wave,
 Yet o'er the main there seemed to reign
 The stillness of the grave.
 Each fishing-boat seemed scarce afloat,
 Dark ships were anchored nigh;
 On one alone the moonbeams shone,
 Whose flag was half-mast high.
 And then I knew, while stars were few,
 The angel had come down,
 And o'er some brow, all peaceful now,
 Had held the immortal crown.

'His race is run, his voyage done,'
 I could not choose but sigh;
 'Sad tears would flow if some could know
 That flag was half-mast high.'
 Shine on, fair moon, and set not soon;
 Look down, ye golden stars;
 And shed your light on souls to-night
 That feel their pri-on bars.
 For that glad soul who sees the goal,
 The heavenly haven nigh,
 We will not weep, though on the deep
 A flag rides half-mast high.

C. A. BARNARD.



BY THE SICK BED.

IT is better to go to the house of woe
 Than to go to the house of mirth;
 For in sorrow the heart goes up to God,
 But in joy it clings to earth.
 It is better to sit by the sick man's bed
 Than to feast as the rich man's guest;
 For the lesson is good, by sickness taught,
 That this world is not our rest.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 351.)



N the meantime Baylis was counting his resources. The debt, with interest, came in all to two pounds seven shillings and sixpence. His available capital came to thirty shillings and a few pence. But out of this he would have to pay his subscription to the football club, and then some allowance must be made for other expenses during the term.

Suppose he paid Martin fifteen shillings, would he be content? Perhaps he would. At all events he would try it.

But he had promised to go with Sharp to the 'Laurel Tree' on Wednesday. If he was going to

continue these visits, how could the debt ever be paid off? Another fifteen shillings would soon go, and he would be as badly off as before.

There was only one way out of the difficulty, and that was to cease these visits.

But what would the Sharps say? He had been gradually drifting away from the society of other lads, and he did not like the thought of being cut off from these also. But something must be done, so he would try to go only occasionally, and not to spend much money when there.

Having made this resolve his mind felt somewhat easier, and he was able to look upon Wednesday's excursion as a pleasure which he had a right to indulge in when about to exercise such great self-denial during the rest of the term.

When the two Sharps, Green, Baylis, and Clarkson, set out from the playground on the Wednesday afternoon, they passed a small crowd of lads who were just starting upon a paper-chase.

Baylis for the moment could not help envying Tosstop, Freckles, Battersley, and the others, who in flannels were just starting after their foxes.

But A. Sharp broke in with a sneer.

'Look at those donkeys there, going to pound across the fields on a sweltering day like this!'

'They'll come back jolly hungry, though,' said Green, who was apt to consider this an immense advantage.

'What's the good of that? They can't stop to get

a drink anywhere, and there'll be nothing but tea for them when they get back.'

'I suppose we shall be able to refresh?' asked Clarkson.

'Rather,' replied Sharp.

'Oh, that's all right then,' said the other.

Sharp then began to hold forth on the beauties of the game they hoped to indulge in, which Green capped by praising the bread-and-cheese and beer to be obtained under the shade of the 'Laurel Tree.'

However, disappointment was in store for them. On arriving at the inn they found their favourite resort already occupied by some of the elder lads, who drove them out with terrible threats. They retreated to the bar, where Baylis had his interview with Martin, tendering him the fifteen shillings, and promising the rest as soon as possible.

Martin took the money cautiously, turned it over and over in his palm, and then spoke.

'Well, a-course this is an instalment, but the rest must come soon, mind ye. You can't expect an honest man to be kept out of his hard-earned money long.'

This was quite a long speech for Mr. Martin to make, and in some senses it was a very remarkable one, for if there was one point more than another about which Winterham people agreed it was that 'Martin o' the "Laurel Tree" was a lazy fellow, whose habits of life would not bear looking into.'

But Baylis was not to know that, so he humbly replied that the remainder of the debt should be paid as soon as he could get the money. Then, when all had refreshed themselves—at Clarkson's expense, since Sharp showed such was only fair at his first visit—they left the house.

CHAPTER XV.

THE elder Sharp was a good deal put out by this disappointment. He had looked forward to spending an afternoon in his favourite dissipation at the expense of his companions. Moreover, if Clarkson had in any way found the game to his taste, he would have been sure of one more dupe, at whose expense he could now and then enjoy himself. And now to be turned away from his resort in this way! It was too provoking.

The party went out into the main road grumbling at their ill success and at one another. Sharp declared that they would have been there before the other party if Green had not felt himself insulted by a farmer's lad on the way, and spent ten minutes of precious time in a wordy battle with him. Clarkson expressed a fear that they had got themselves into trouble by going out of bounds without having any pleasure to set against it; but, on being assured that such an offence was rarely found out, contentedly observed, 'Oh, that's all right then.' Baylis, having some good reasons for feeling uneasy, made himself disagreeable to everybody in turn.

Without having any particular end in view, they wandered for some distance along the high road. Then Sharp was suddenly struck with an idea.

'Let's cut across the fields by the footpath to Worley.'

'What's the good?' asked Baylis, sulkily.

'Come and see.'

So they started, but not without Green suggesting, in a private way to Clarkson, his opinion that Sharp was trying to 'sell' them, and declaring his intention, if such should prove to be the case, of pounding him very small indeed. To which Clarkson, comforted by the prospect of retaliation, replied, 'Oh, that's all right then.'

The footpath offered more variety than the high road, and so caused a temporary lull in the disputes amongst the party.

When they had passed through several fields the elder Sharp suddenly called a halt, and pointing to an orchard, from which they were separated by a low hedge, smacked his lips and suggested a raid.

'Prime pears over there. Let's toss up who shall go over.'

'Not for me,' said Baylis.

'Why?' asked Sharp, in amazement.

'If I want pears I can buy them.'

'Pooh, that's all very well,' said Sharp, with a sneer; 'of course, I know why you won't go.'

'Why?'

'What's the good of asking? I don't want to quarrel with you.'

'Never mind that. Why won't I go?'

'Why, because you're afraid.'

'No, I'm not; so there now.'

'Oh, no, of course not. But we four can toss up amongst ourselves—can't we, Green?'

'Yes,' said Green, but in a tone which did not imply much pleasure at the prospect.

'You needn't trouble yourselves,' said Baylis; 'you shall have plenty without that.'

With these words, he set off towards the other field, and was soon seen inspecting the hedge with a view to crossing.

The elder Sharp, when sure of his intention, winked with both eyes at his companions, saying, 'I thought that would fetch him up to the scratch, and keep us out of it.'

Baylis soon found a weak place in the hedge, and made his way across. He was lost to view for five or six minutes, and then came quietly back in the same way.

On arriving at the group, he emptied his pockets of fruit, which was rapidly secured by his four companions.

'Aren't you going to keep any?' asked Green, who feared some of the spoil would have to be returned.

'No, thanks; I don't want them. Only I wasn't afraid of going.'

The others made no objection to this arrangement, and were already tasting the fruit, when the younger Sharp, whose fears had kept him silent whilst making him watchful, uttered a cry.

'Look out! Here's the farmer coming.'

They all started up in a moment.

'Where?' cried Green, hastily replacing in his pocket a half-eaten pear.

'I saw him looking over the hedge just across there.'

'Perhaps he's gone off again,' suggested Clarkson.

'There's a gate out of that orchard into the field behind us,' said Baylis.

'Then he's coming round there, you see,' cried

Sharp; and with that he began to make off in the opposite direction.

This course was much approved of by his brother and Green, who at once set off after him.

Baylis was indulging in a laugh at their flight, when he saw the farmer coming quickly towards them along the footpath.

'We had better be off. Here he comes, Clarkson;' and then these two ran after the advanced guard.

The farmer was a stout, heavy man; but he evidently meant pursuit, for he came on behind them in a heavy, shambling trot.

Baylis and Clarkson soon caught up the others, and the former caused fresh alarm by saying, 'I believe the farm-house is in front. This path goes right by it. He'll have us then.'

'So it does!' said the elder Sharp, coming to a dead stop.

What was to be done? Behind them was the farmer, in front the farm-house. Baylis took a rapid survey of the position.

'Look here,' he said, 'our best chance is to cut across these fields to the right. If we creep along under the hedges he may miss us, and we shall easily make our way back to the road.'

The others hesitated; cross-country work was not much to their taste.

'Look here,' said the elder Sharp, after a moment's thought, as they moved in the direction suggested, 'I don't see why *we* should run away. *We* didn't bag the pears.'

'No,' said Baylis; 'but if he catches you with the fruit in your pockets he won't believe it.'

'I never thought of that,' said Sharp; and he at once began dropping the stolen fruit as they went along.

'All right,' said Baylis, 'you're only telling him which way we went; and he won't believe us any the more for your pockets being empty, when he sees his pears in this field.'

'I wish I had never touched them,' said Sharp, whose fears began to get the better of his greed.

'You proposed it,' said Baylis.

'But we shouldn't have had them if you hadn't rushed off like that, because the farmer would have turned up before we were over.'

'Well, never mind now. You keep all your breath for the running; you'll want it.'

'It's as bad as the paper-chase,' said Green, who began to show signs of distress.

'Worse,' said Sharp, junior; 'you *can* leave off there when you like, and you can't with that farmer behind.'

Baylis laughed, ill-naturedly enough, at their distress, feeling sure of his own ability to escape if he chose to do so.

They had passed through one field, and were crossing another in the direction of a tempting gate, when a fresh cause of alarm appeared.

The field was a large one, and before they had crossed half its surface, they saw a figure advancing to meet them, which looked much like that of a bull. The party came to a standstill. Then Baylis spoke.

'It is a bull, and no mistake; we had better look out for ourselves.'

With this the whole party broke up. The two

Sharps, Green, and Clarkson turned back, the former making for a row of half-a-dozen young elms which skirted the field in that direction, and the latter trying for the gate by which they had entered.

The bull, on seeing them turn to fly, at once made up his mind that something was wrong, and advanced at a smart trot in their direction. Green and Clarkson, seeing that he was gaining upon them, gave up all hope of reaching the gate, and made for the elms also. In the meantime Baylis, who had headed for a promising gap in the hedge near at hand, found himself disregarded by the bull, and therefore struck boldly across the field for the gate they had originally sought. When he gained this refuge, and looked around, he could discern the forms of Green and Clarkson climbing into one tree, whilst the two Sharps were disappearing amongst the branches of another. Below, the bull walked from one to another in a manner the reverse of friendly.

Seeing that aid to the besieged was out of the question, he made the best of his way home again, leaving the four prisoners to their fate.

The elder Sharp saw this, and his anger knew no bounds.

'Look at that beggar, Baylis! It's all his fault that we are up a tree here, and yet he cuts off like that!' 'I don't see why he should stay,' said Clarkson, valiantly.

'Why, if he hadn't tried to drive off this bull, he might have stopped to see how we got on.'

'It's a regular sell, and no mistake,' said Green.

'I don't see it,' said Clarkson. 'Should you have stopped, Sharp?'

'Yes, a dozen times.'

'Oh, that's all right then.'

And so the discussion dropped. But after a moment of silence the younger Sharp started another ground of alarm.

'We shall have the farmer here in a minute.'

They had forgotten him in the still greater excitement of avoiding his bull! But now they began anxiously looking out in his direction; and Green actually climbed several branches higher in order to scan the fields beyond. However, nothing could be seen, and they were able to turn their attention once more to the bull.

This orderly animal seemed to think that duty required him to keep a strict watch upon the boys who had thus invaded the privacy of his field. He paced from tree to tree, occasionally relieving his feelings by an indignant bellow, and making great sport of Green's cap, which had fallen off in his hasty ascent.

'I wish this beast would go away,' said Sharp the elder in a complaining tone, after these tactics had lasted for about half an hour.

'So do I,' said Green. 'It's getting on for tea-time, and we shall lose our grub.'

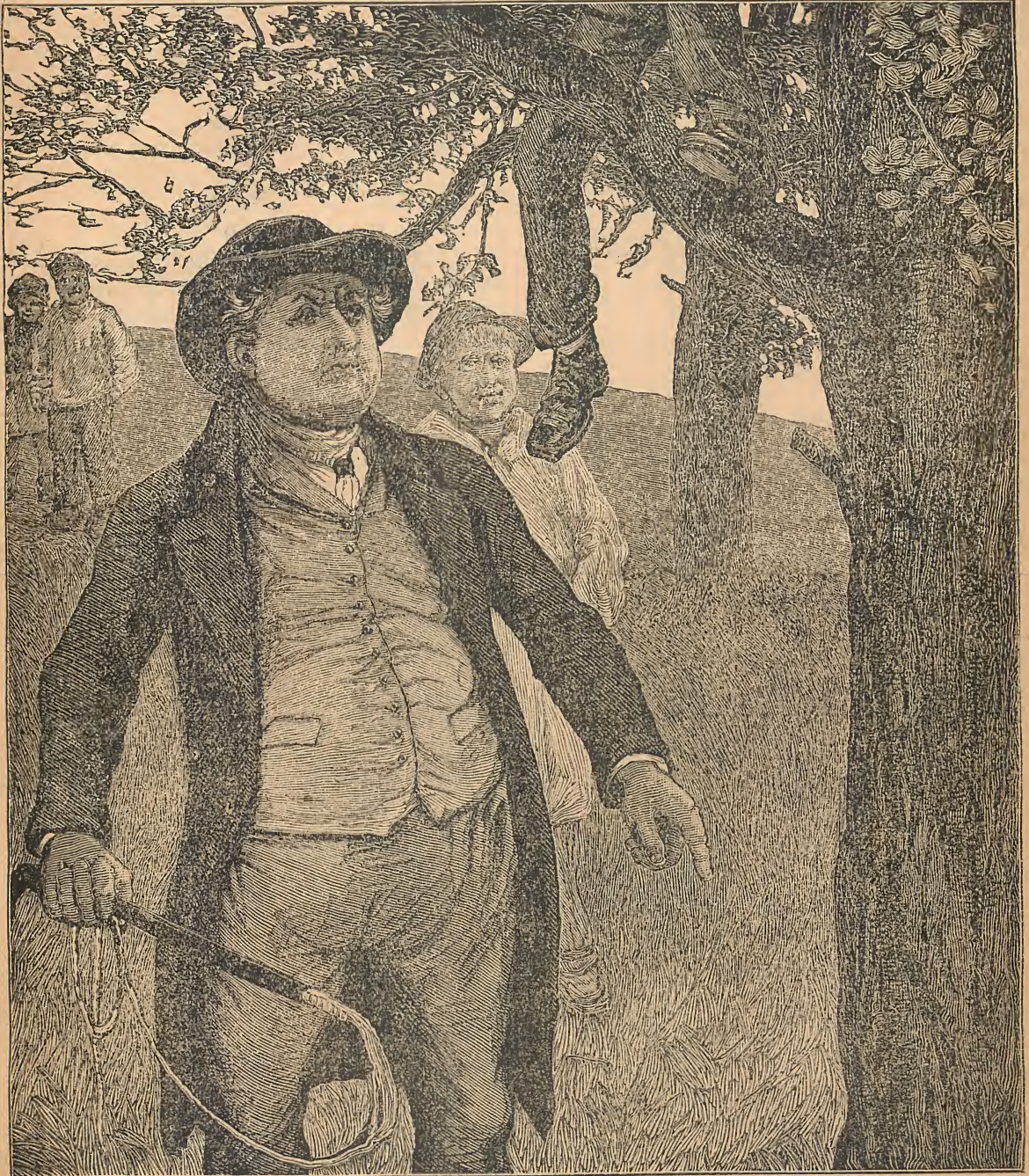
Just then they were afforded a sight which did not at all tend to raise their spirits. Down the footpath in the distance they saw the paper-chase party, at whose exertions they had once laughed, streaming in a long line towards home.

'I wish I was one of them,' sighed Clarkson. But nobody heard his complaint.

(To be continued.)



"It is a Bull, and no mistake."



"Now then, my lads, just come down from that!"

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 359.)



THE stream of lads passed from sight, and once again there was only that wretched bull to attract their attention.

'Let us try and pelt him off,' said the elder Sharp, suddenly.

'Good idea,' said Green.

'Cut a stick, then, and shy it at him.'

'Cut it yourself,' said

Green, who, being every whit as selfish as Sharp, quite understood his tactics.

'Pooh,' said Sharp, shamed for once into action, 'I'm not afraid, if you are.'

With this he broke off a dry stick which lay near his hand, and threw at the enemy.

Now it must be confessed that Sharp did not intend to hit the bull, but, being a mere baby at cricket or any other games, his stick, which was meant to fly wide of the bull, actually struck that animal over the eyes.

'That's the way to —,' began Sharp, amazed at his own shot. But he did not complete the sentence, for the bull, with a dreadful bellow, ran straight at his tree. Sharp clung to his branch with both arms, expecting every minute to be shaken to the ground. But as this did not happen, he ventured to look down. There was the bull, evidently bent on keeping a very special watch on that particular tree.

'Now, Green,' said he, 'you take a shot at him.'

'No, thank you,' said Green, who had watched the effect of the other shot; 'I don't think he likes it.'

'Coward!' said the younger Sharp, breaking off a twig about a foot long, and feebly casting it towards the bull. 'Why don't you do as I do?'

'Because it wouldn't do any good. That wouldn't kill a fly on his back.'

'Oh, no; I suppose not!'

Green made no reply to this ironical retort, but settled himself more comfortably on his branch, and proceeded to stay his hunger by eating one of the pears which had brought them into so much trouble.

Presently Clarkson made a most important discovery.

'Look here, Green, I believe we can get out of this.'

'How?'

'Why, don't you see that these two branches just reach over the hedge? If they'll bear our weight, we can drop off them into the next field.'

'So we can,' said Green, after a short examination. 'What donkeys we were not to have seen it before! I believe we shall not be late for tea now.'

'What's that you're talking about?' cried the elder Sharp, who had not caught the whole of this dialogue.

'Why, Green and I are going to try and drop over the hedge from the outside boughs.'

'What, and leave us behind?'

The tree in which the two Sharps had taken refuge was the smallest of the group, and its branches did not reach as far as the hedge. But they had chosen this as being the easiest to climb, and therefore had no reason to complain.

'Yes, unless you can get into our tree.'

'Well, that is mean!' said Sharp, junior, 'I would never leave a fellow in the lurch like that.'

'What's the good of our staying?' asked Green.

'Nothing,' said the spiteful Sharp; 'you aren't any good anywhere.'

'Can't we do something for you when we are down?' asked Clarkson.

'No,' was the snappish reply.

'Oh, that's all right then,' said Clarkson in his composed way, as he carefully travelled along the bough which promised a way of escape. Both the boughs were thin and weak. Would they bear them? Sharp did not think so.

'They'll break, I know they will; and then that bull will be on you in no time.'

'All right,' said Green; 'let him.'

The prospect of losing his tea had a very stimulating effect on him, and he had no reason to believe that Sharp's alarm was the result of anything more than a wish to stop their going.

Slowly and carefully they both crawled to the end of the boughs, the bull meanwhile watching their progress with the air of one much interested in their success and failure. Once landed clear of the hedge, it was a simple matter to drop into the dry ditch on the other side.

Then with a 'Good-bye; hope somebody will soon come and drive him off,' they set out on a run for the footpath, and so for home. The pangs of hunger urged Green to unusual exertions; but, although they ran nearly all the way, the playground was empty when they reached it.

'They're in at tea,' said Green, dolefully; 'we must look sharp or else there will be none for us.'

A few hasty preparations enabled them to put in an appearance at the tea-table before the meal was over. There was some anxiety on the part of Toss-top and others to know where they had been, and what had become of the Sharps. But Green was too much intent on making up for lost time to notice any such inquiries, and Baylis volunteered no statement. Their curiosity was therefore unsatisfied until a later period.

It was not until the autumn evening was fast fading into night that any news of the Sharps arrived; and then, during the preparation-hour, a rumour ran through the school that Farmer Willis had brought them to the Doctor, and charged them with stealing his pears.

CHAPTER XVI.

WE will now return to the Sharps and see how they fared after Green and Clarkson left them.

Not being an amiable pair even towards each other, they naturally fell a-quarrelling. But, as this could not help to mend the situation, they speedily came to terms again, and consoled one another with the thought that if they were punished they would bring the other fellows in for it too, somehow.

Presently they heard the church clock at Winter-

ham strike six, and they knew that at school tea would be over and their absence marked. About that time the wicked bull seemed to fall off in the closeness of his attentions, and roamed out towards the centre of the field. The prisoners could hardly believe their eyes.

'I believe he's going,' said the elder.

'Stay a minute; don't be too sure.'

'Yes, he is. We had better get down and cut for the gate.'

In pursuance of this project they slowly came down from their tree, and had just taken a few rapid steps towards the gate when the wily bull saw the movement and charged down headlong upon them.

They were not far enough from the old refuge to make it safe to run for the gate, so they hastily turned and climbed once more into their tree. They were only just in time, and the gaoler raged horribly below as they got safely out of reach.

'You won't catch me trying that on again,' said the younger Sharp; 'he nearly had us that time.'

After this episode they sat cramped in their tree for another hour, until at last they began to wonder whether the tree was to be their bed for that night.

'If we don't come home they'll want to know who went out with us, and then those fellows will have to say, and somebody will turn up.' This was the elder Sharp's view of the case.

'Yes; and won't the young beggars in the fourth go on about our being up a tree like this, oh, no! I wish I had never come out with you.' This was the opinion of his younger brother.

However, they were preserved from a very much longer sojourn in the tree, for a farm lad, coming along that way, discovered the state of siege and ran off to tell his master.

Farmer Willis was soon on the spot, accompanied by the man who was in charge of the bull. He had taken the precaution to bring a good stout horsewhip with him, the appearance of which struck terror to the hearts of the captives.

The bull having gone meekly off in charge of his usual attendant, Farmer Willis remained to interview the two Sharps.

'Now then, my lads, just come down from that.'

This modest request he accompanied with a crack of his whip.

'It's all a mistake, sir,' began the elder of the two.

'You won't find it any mistake if you don't come down pretty smart.'

'It isn't our fault,' began the younger one, getting ready to come down.

'Never mind about that just this minute. You come down out of that.'

There was no resisting this appeal, especially as they were really within reach of his horsewhip. Slowly and carefully they descended—so slowly and carefully that Farmer Willis could not resist the temptation to quicken their movements by a suggestive flick of his whip, which caused them to slide down the tree-trunk at a much faster rate than they ever thought possible.

'Now then,' began the farmer, holding one of his prisoners in each hand, 'you can take your choice. Will you tell me your names and let me take you

home, or shall I march you in to the constable at Winterham?'

'Oh, if you please ——' began the younger Sharp with a whimper.

'None of that, now. Make up your minds which it shall be. Where do you come from?'

'We all come from St. Egbert's,' said the elder Sharp, 'all five of us. We haven't done anything; it was the fellows who got away who had the pears.'

'Oh, you *are* some of that lot, eh? I thought so. Very good. St. Egbert's, eh? Then we'll just go and see your master about this.'

Farmer Willis soon made his preparations, and then the two Sharps were led away amidst the ill-concealed mirth of two or three plough-boys, who, as they sometimes suffered from the tongues of the St. Egbert's lads, took this opportunity of repaying their insults with interest.

On the journey back the prisoners did not fail to carefully impress upon their captor the fact that they themselves were the least to blame in the matter, and that the others had really done all the mischief.

These statements did not, however, seem to find favour with the farmer.

'All right,' said he; 'you never mind about the others. It's only you I care about, as I found you on my land.' And with this they were fain to be content, although consoling themselves with the thought that their companions should not escape when it came to telling their story to Dr. Swanage.

Arrived at the school, they were at once brought face to face with the Doctor, who, having made a note of Farmer Willis's statement, parted from that worthy with many thanks for his kindness in bringing the case before him, and with many promises that full justice should be done on the morrow. The two culprits were also dismissed with the prospect of proper investigation on the following day.

Before they arrived in the schoolroom, the full account of their adventures, so far as they were known to Clarkson and Green, had gone the round of those present. Their artistic class-mate had already prepared an elaborate drawing, in which a monstrous bull, with horns about three feet long and very beautifully curved, was shown tossing the elder Sharp into a tree, whilst his younger brother was seen climbing another tree with extraordinary agility, and looking over his shoulder with an air of alarm at the terrible fate of his companion. This production was handed around, and met with universal admiration. It was understood, also, that Tosstop was engaged upon a poem in honour of the event, and this was quite borne out by the silent and busy state of that lad, as well as by the small pile of torn paper which had collected underneath his desk. But perhaps his genius had forsaken him on this occasion, for no poem made its appearance, and he seemed rather downcast during the whole of the evening.

Green, having been several times called upon to tell the story, found himself at last quite a person of importance, and at every fresh telling added some new and surprising points to his account. This at last brought some notice upon him, and one or two began to dispute the correctness of his memory somewhat in this way:—

(*To be continued.*)



THE DONKEY'S GRAVE.

ON Christmas Day, 1865, I was told that an ancient donkey, said to be sixty years old, a favourite of the children, had died, and was lying in the paddock where it had long lived. Even the oldest inhabitant could not tell its age with certainty.

'A dead donkey' is not at all a common sight. I had never seen it, so I went down with some of the children to the field; but the dead donkey had been buried in the meantime, and we missed the wondrous sight.

But a very interesting scene met our eyes. Two Shetland ponies, mother and foal, who had been for some years in the paddock, appeared to be rather

disturbed, and we watched them for a time. They galloped round in circles, then cautiously approached the newly-turned-up ground in apparent dread, then started off again in a gallop to some distance, and again trembling approached.

At length the younger one appeared to take more courage, and advanced to the grave, and smelt over it, and gazed at its mother, as if to inquire what had become of their poor old companion: it then put its foot upon the mound, and pawed the broken turf. It was plain, however, that the pony had no angry or vicious intent, but rather the action seemed as if the dumb animal were inquiring, 'Where art thou, old friend and companion?'
J. O. F.



THE HIGH TOR, MATLOCK.

MATLOCK DALE is a deep and narrow winding valley that extends from Matlock town to Cromford, a distance of nearly three miles, everywhere wildly romantic and rich in picturesque combinations. At the bottom of the valley the Derwent sweeps along, bearing all the reflected hues of the varied foliage that overhangs its devious course. The High Tor stands at the entrance to the valley, and is one of the most striking examples of rock scenery in Derbyshire. It is a vast and imposing

mass of limestone, which lifts its precipitous front to a height of 350 feet. The sloping base is covered for some distance upwards with a tangled underwood—hazles, honeysuckles, wild roses, brambles; from the midst of which rise a profusion of trees of different kinds—the mountain ash, the drooping willow, the gnarled and knotted oak, and the delicate birch, mingling their branches. The upper part of the Tor, for more than 150 feet, is one mass of naked perpendicular rock, indented with rents and fissures,

from whose crevices peep out tufts of grass, and shrubs, and flowers, with here and there a few stunted trees, which give an inaccessible retreat to hundreds of noisy rooks and daws.

The High Tor is interesting to the geologist from the section of strata which it exhibits externally, and also from the cavern or grotto which it contains. Passing through a little stone shed at its entrance, visitors, each with a lighted candle, follow the guide along a level path which penetrates into the heart of the Tor. The roof and sides of this cavern are encrusted with countless crystallisations of calcareous spar, chiefly of the double pyramid or dog-tooth shape. Many of the crystals are of perfect form, and ten to twelve inches in length. About midway a rude chandelier, garnished with candles, is suspended from the roof, and when this is lighted the effect is very brilliant. Further on the path descends, the roof becomes lower, and presently a lake of clear water is reached, some sixty feet across, beyond which the rocks close in and further progress is impossible.

THE CHEETAH, OR HUNTING LEOPARD.

THIS beautiful creature is about the size of an ordinary leopard, and is a variety of the same species; but in several respects it differs from any one of the same class of animals. It has longer and narrower feet, and longer limbs. These peculiarities adapt it for taking its prey, rather by running than by leaping or climbing. But the most interesting peculiarity of the cheetah is its tractable disposition and great intelligence. In these respects it almost resembles a dog, but its form of head and its general anatomy are entirely those of the feline species.

It is widely distributed both in Asia and Africa; and for a long period it has been tamed and used in the chase, both in Persia and India. The different species of deer and antelopes are the game pursued, and packs of cheetahs are often kept by Indian princes. The method pursued in hunting is to take the cheetah with its head closely covered by a leathern hood to the neighbourhood of the game. When within about two hundred yards of the herd, the hood is removed, and the cheetah let loose. He crawls forward, much as a cat would do who intends to pounce upon a thoughtless sparrow; he takes advantage of any inequality of ground or clump of brushwood to conceal his approach, till the deer begins to show alarm, when he is among them in a moment, and with amazing rapidity strikes down his victim with one blow of his paw.

It would be a very well-trained cheetah indeed, who would be willing to give up his victim after being secured. This is the great difficulty, only to be overcome by offering the cheetah flesh food to entice it away. If its first attempt to secure its prey should prove unsuccessful, it is a curious trait in its disposition that it will not pursue the flying antelopes; rather it seems ashamed of its defeat, and slowly crawls back to its master.

When the cheetah is treated with kindness it shows much docility and affection for its owner.

D. B. MCKEAN.

A GUESSING STORY.

WE are twins, and as much alike as twins usually are, yet with difference enough to distinguish us; for one of us is a little bigger and stronger than the other. We are so closely united that it might be said that we are inseparable; certainly we should be poor, helpless creatures apart from one another. If we have ever parted company, it has only been when we were not responsible for our acts, having, as it is called, a screw loose somewhere.

I cannot say we practise the golden rule, for though we know by experience the advantages of union, our whole object in life is to cause division, and we never do anything to heal the breaches we make. We never say anything; but our acts are of the most cutting description.

It is said, on the highest authority, that we once caused such a quarrel between a husband and wife, that the man was actually guilty of his wife's death. As she was the most obstinate person I ever heard of, he certainly had some excuse.

As to minor matters, I have sometimes heard it said in society that we are stiff; yet we are generally bright and polished. With regard to diet, we have a horror of water, because it spoils our complexions; the only thing we ever fancy is a little drop of oil now and then taken medicinally when we are not quite up to our work. Whenever we need our drops we make our desires known by squeaking, as a baby cries for what it wants. You will find us oftenest in the company of the fair sex, and we generally choose the most industrious as our companions.

EDITH C. RICKARDS.

ELEPHANTS.



HERE are two kinds of elephant, the African and Asian. The former is seldom domesticated, but is hunted down and killed for the sake of his tusks, which are larger and heavier than those of his Asiatic relation.

All over Southern Asia, with the sole exception of Arabia, the elephant is found; but the home the animal delights in is the hot, moist, swampy forests of India and Burmah.

They are great travellers, and have been encountered on mountain-tops even as high as 7000 feet above the sea; the herds contain from twenty to fifty, but, in favourably situated countries, 100 have been found living together. Each herd is led by the strongest and largest bull, who leads it through the jungles.

When two herds meet terrible fights take place between the leaders, and sometimes one bull is driven off and wanders alone about the jungles; these outcasts become very sulky and savage without company, charging wildly at anything they see, and their tusks, broken short off in the stems of trees, are frequently found in the elephant forests.

In India elephants are caught by being quietly driven to a place having plenty of water and grass, men being stationed in a circle all round to keep

them together. The men do not show themselves, but hide in the trees, and make a noise when any of the beasts are inclined to stray; very little disturbance is required to turn a wild elephant.

When all is ready for securing the beasts, trained females, with men on their necks, who are provided with long ropes, go quietly in among the wild ones and first remove the leading bull; one elephant caressing him while another treacherously passes the ropes round his legs, handing up the ends to the men on their own necks; and these tame catchers really seem to take delight in reducing the wild ones to slavery.

When the ropes are fast the tame ones move off towards the camp, still caressing the captive, and, before he is quite aware of it, his legs are chained to a good stout tree, and he is a prisoner for the rest of his life.

When all the bulls have been taken the females are easily induced to follow, and it is a pretty sight to see them marching off accompanied by the calves; the latter are really very pretty when young, and as fond of play and quite as full of tricks as other young animals; they butt at one another, scuttle in and out among their parents' legs, jump off the ground like young goats, and, queerest trick of all, they are constantly trying to stand on their heads, making meantime the most ridiculous squeakings and trumpetings.

It takes about four months to tame a full-grown wild elephant; but he, or she, is not trusted alone for a year, for fear it might run away; but the calves give no trouble, and soon become great pets, coming up to the house for fruit, biscuits, and sugar-cane: but it does not do to let the little creatures see where you keep those goodies, for I had a pet baby elephant who found out that the fruit was kept in a large earthen jar, four feet in height, on top of which the filter and tumblers were placed, and one day, when he thought no one was looking, the cunning little thief stole into the room and, tilting everything off the jar over on to the ground, seized a large bunch of bananas in his tiny trunk, and ran away to his mother, who was too dangerous to go near, she having been only a few months caught.

The impudent little creature, while eating his ill-gotten prize, kept peeping out between the old lady's forelegs with his head on one side, apparently to see what I thought of his prowess.

As he grew up, he was put to drag a small cart, and unless carefully watched, would gradually edge the cart to the side of the road and topple the contents into the ditch.

One very bad trick he had when loose was to hide in the jungle when he heard any one riding towards the house, and as they came close he would bring his trunk down on the earth with such a bang, that several visitors were thrown from their ponies, and every one had to keep a sharp look-out. With all his fun there was nothing vicious about him, and children could get on his back and play with him without fear.

To me he was most affectionate, and I have often awoke from my afternoon nap to find him standing alongside my grass hammock, lightly feeling me all over with his trunk.

Elephants are extremely useful, and when kindly treated are docile and tractable; but they have good memories and recollect injuries quite as well as kindness, seldom failing to retaliate upon those who behave cruelly to them; though the chance of revenge may not occur for months and years.

You, no doubt, have read the story of the Arabian tailor who pricked an elephant with his needle, as he put his trunk in at the shop window as he passed on his way to the daily bath in the river, and, who, filling his trunk with dirty water, spouted it over his tormentor as he returned. This is a very common way these animals have of paying off old scores, and should there be no water at hand, they will fill the trunk with ashes, or dust, suddenly blowing it over those who have offended them.

The trunk is never used for striking, and, in fact, when any danger is threatened, is coiled close up for protection; but when angry, the elephant will catch up a clod of earth, a stone, or log of wood, and throw it with great force, or they will break off the branch of a tree, and make use of it as a club, or as a fan, to brush flies away.

At the tip of the trunk there is a projection like a finger, and large as the great beast looks, he can pick up a thimble with just as much ease as a log of wood, or any similar large object.

The tusks are the main weapons of defence, and among the tame males it is usual to saw off the points, so that in case of a fight the combatants cannot gore one another.

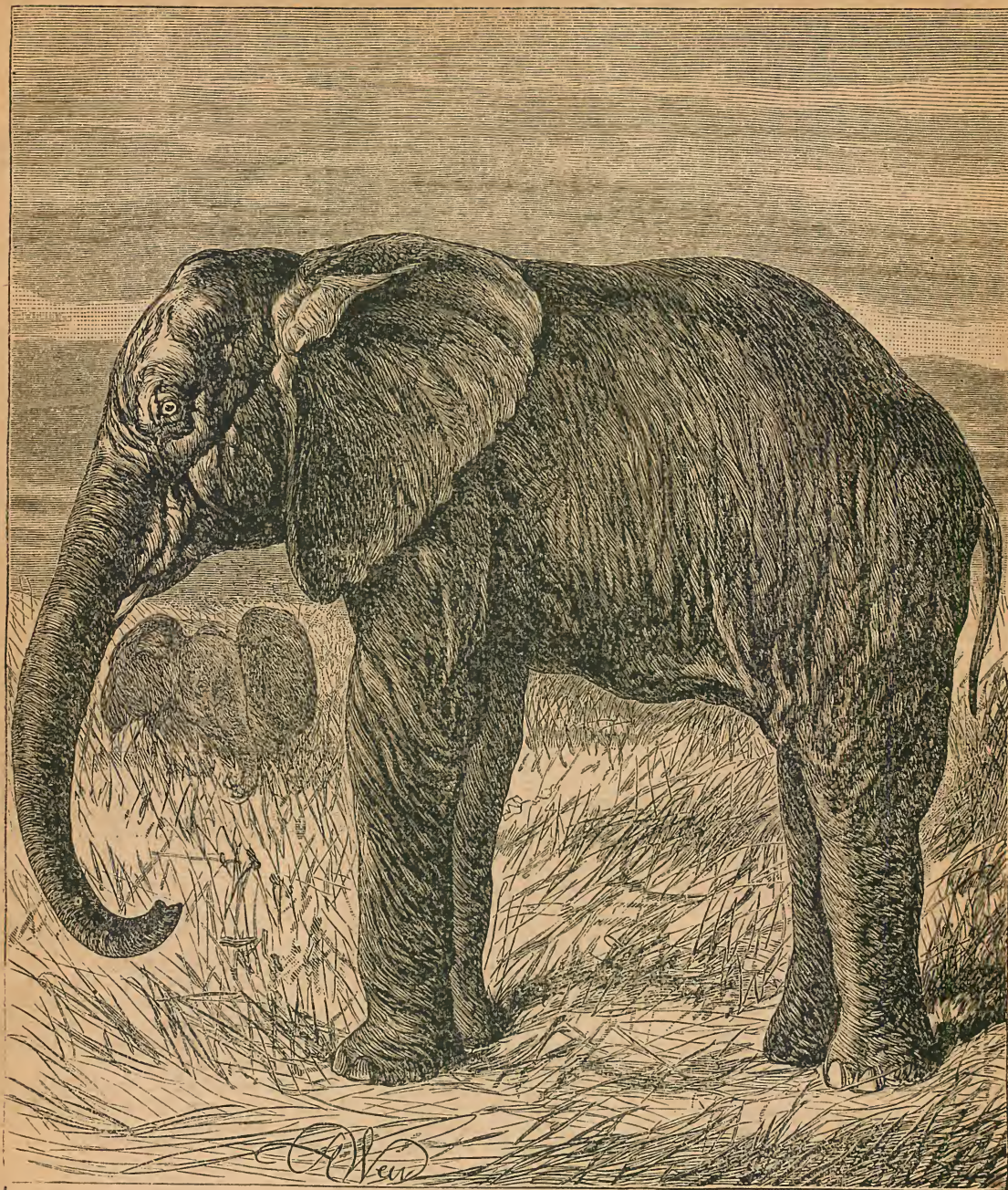
At Rangoon, in Burmah, an old elephant, named Rajah, is kept, whose tusks have not been cut, as he acts as a kind of schoolmaster to the other animals, of whom a large number are employed there.

It is sometimes necessary there to put elephants on to rafts, and many of them object to this, not liking the shaking and unsteadiness; when one refuses, Rajah is called, and comes rushing up behind, trumpeting loudly; the refractory beast looks round, and one glance at the gleaming tusks is sufficient, and he steps on to the raft quick enough. Rajah seldom has to make actual use of his weapons.

For defending itself, in addition to the tusks, the elephant kicks, and tremendous ones they can give, females particularly, and wild buffaloes, who sometimes attack them, are emboldened to do so by the animal turning round as if to run away; but this is only a device to get the assailant within reach of the ponderous hind leg, a kick from which will send him rolling over and over with a broken back.

Many anecdotes might be told of the elephant's usefulness and sagacity, and now that no one is allowed to shoot the wild ones in India, it is expected that in a few years they will become so numerous as to be used for all purposes that cart-horses are now required for, at least, in tropical countries; but as they stand cold almost as well as heat, we may yet see them become common in England and Australia.

You must know that, ages ago, there was an English elephant; but he was covered with wool like a sheep, and another elephant lived in Russia, and North America, who had long fur like the Polar bear. Both these creatures must have needed such warm covering in such cold countries.



African Elephants.

Here is an anecdote that shows the sagacity of these animals. Thirty years ago, elephants had to be brought up in ships from Burmah to Calcutta; they were not allowed much fresh water, which was kept in iron tanks arranged down the middle of the vessel in front of them; these tanks were closed with round lids, that screwed in, and as they had to be opened night and morning to give the animals drink, the cunning creatures soon found out the way of unscrewing them and helping themselves in the night when all was quiet: men had, at last, to be put on as

sentries over the tanks, or the whole supply would have been drunk up in a couple of days.

Another thing they did was, when they received their allowance of sugar-cane in the morning, they would immediately lie down upon it, and then try and steal from their neighbours; if any delay took place in serving out their food, they would trumpet and bang their trunks against the water-tanks, creating such a disturbance that it made the people on passing ships wonder what the vessel had on board.

O. W.



"Tom" being photographed.



A PET TIGER.

THITAN,' as the natives called him, and Tom, as we dubbed him, was, as you see from his portrait, a young male tiger. I was riding home one afternoon through a forest in the Sylhet district, keeping my eyes well about me, you may be sure, for there is no saying what one may meet in the Indian jungles. Near home I had to ford a small river. The stream, swollen by the heavy rains, was nearly three feet deep, and running very fast; when halfway across my pony began to snort and cock his ears at some object in the river, and then for the first time I caught sight of little Tom, who, in attempting to swim over had miscalculated his strength, and was being rapidly carried towards me by the current. Waiting till he was within reach, I leant over and tried to catch him by the neck; but, despite his exhausted condition, he made a good struggle for liberty, and scratched and bit at me in fine style. At last, when almost half-drowned, I dragged him on to the saddle in front of me, not without strong objection from my pony, who plunged and reared at his additional rider's spittings and growlings. I had a tough job to secure my prize, but wrapping him tightly up in my coat so that he could neither use teeth or claws, I galloped away as fast as possible, as I knew Tom's mother could not be far off, and I had no wish to be caught by her in the act of kidnapping her baby.

We had to feed Tom on milk, and he grew very fond of his bottle; but was soon weaned, and for some months behaved well, being docile and tractable, sleeping on the outside of my bed. But I soon had to provide him with a cage and chain at night, for as he grew older his savage nature began to show itself, and he not only fought with the dogs, but had a trick of hiding himself under sofas, beds, and behind doors, pouncing suddenly out on the bare legs of the native servants, much to their dismay.

When about six months old, Tom was photographed, not without a great deal of trouble, for he made a rush at the artist and upset the camera. We had to bribe him to stand steady by letting him first kill a duck, upon the body of which he kept his eye all the time his likeness was being taken.

Not long after this, Tom began to deserve the name of 'Shitan' (or demon), for he grew quite savage and actually attacked the doctor's horse, but he received such a kick in return that he let horses alone ever after. But he soon became rather a dangerous nuisance, and would stray about the plantation, jumping on and wounding goats and sheep whenever he got the chance of slipping his chain.

At last Tom's misdeeds reached their height. One evening he could not be found, so a lot of people were turned out to search for him, and when he was found there was a pretty to-do. It seems that Master Tom had strayed away on to the public road, where, hiding behind a bush, he had sprung suddenly out in front of a carriage and pair; the horses, terrified at such an appearance, overturned the carriage, throwing a lady and gentleman into the ditch, and when I came up there was a fine scene! The broken carriage, its late occupants covered with

mud, a party of natives trying to put matters to rights, while Tom sat in the middle of the road a short distance off calmly washing his face with his paws, surveying the damage he had caused with great apparent satisfaction. Poor Tom had to be shot to prevent further mischief. O. W.

THE PLAGUE IN DERBYSHIRE.

IT was in the sad year 1665, when old London lay desolated by the plague, that a box containing patterns of merchandise was received by a cloth merchant in the little Derbyshire village of Eyam, at that time only numbering 350 inhabitants. The box being opened, the patterns were observed to be damp and mouldy, and were therefore hung up to dry. Alas! before the fatal goods were well out of his hands, the poor tailor who unfolded them was already smitten by the fatal disorder, and in a few days he died.

The plague had begun at Eyam. This sad event took place in the month of August, and was almost immediately followed by the death of several other of the villagers; the terrible disease committing such havoc among them, that in the space of thirteen months after its first outbreak it had carried off 273 persons out of the original number of 350. This unprecedented mortality was never fully accounted for, though doubtless there were reasons which the greater enlightenment of the present day would soon have discovered.

Meanwhile the interesting question occurs, What were those poor villagers doing while their homes were being desolated by this terrible scourge? Did none of them try to escape to other and more favoured localities? It is on record that at first, overwhelmed with terror, the more wealthy inhabitants left the place, while one or two others erected solitary huts in the valleys and on the hills, where they lived out the season of danger in strict seclusion, but the bulk of the population remained at home.

In the month of June, however, when matters were at their very worst and the whole village seemed given over to destruction, a terrible panic arose, the whole people being ready to fly the place. One man, however, a man of courage, unselfishness, and energy, was able to prevent them doing so. This was their clergyman, the Rev. William Mompesson, whose conduct throughout the trying time was beyond all praise. Early in that fatal month of June his young wife, losing heart when she looked at her two little children, threw herself at his feet, and entreated him to leave the devoted village. He could not but be deeply moved by her appeal, but he firmly withstood it. He positively refused to quit Eyam, showing his poor wife that the providence of God had placed him there to counsel, strengthen, and comfort the people. He, however, urged her to go to her relatives in Yorkshire with their children. The poor lady, recovering her faith and composure of spirit, refused to be separated from her husband, and, sending away their little ones to a place of safety, the devoted couple braced themselves up to the terrible duty which lay before them.

The people, having given way to demoralising panic,

were about to leave the village in a body, when their pastor with much earnestness dissuaded them from doing so, pointing out to the affrighted villagers what terrible consequences would follow if they all scattered about among the surrounding hamlets. He warned them against the guilt of carrying the plague far and wide, and at last he prevailed with his flock to lessen their own prospects of safety out of consideration for the lives of others. On his part he promised to remain with them to the last, and to do all in his power to help and guide them; and so the dreadful months wore on. During July and August dead and dying were in the same houses, dreadful wailings were heard on every side, and on every face was seen unutterable woe.

The clergyman was not a strong man, but he retained health during the whole of this trying time, though he was unremitting in visiting from house to house; but a sad and even overwhelming affliction awaited him. In the month of August his gentle and beloved partner was taken from his side, dying of the all-devouring malady in her twenty-seventh year. We read that the few survivors in Eyaam nearly forgot their own griefs in sorrow for the death of this excellent woman, and in sympathy for her husband. For six weeks after this sad event the dreadful scourge continued its ravages, but early in October it was stayed. As suddenly it had come among them, so suddenly it departed. The desolate survivors lifted up their heads once more, and began to resume their ordinary life; but a deep attachment to their pastor and an abiding seriousness had fallen upon them all. To this day the village is pointed out as the spot upon which the capricious and deadly malady had expended its utmost fury; and the Mompesson graves are still to be seen there.

D. B. MCKEAN.

TRUE GENTLEMEN.

I BEG your pardon, and with a smile and a touch of his cap Harry Edmond handed to an old man, against whom he had accidentally stumbled, the staff which he had knocked from his hand. 'I hope I did not hurt you? We were playing too roughly.'

'Not a bit,' said the old man. 'Boys will be boys, and it's best they should be. You didn't harm me.'

'I am glad to hear it,' and lifting his cap again Harry turned to join the playmates with whom he had been frolicking at the time of the accident.

'What do you touch your cap to that old fellow for?' asked his companion, Charlie Gray. 'He is only old Giles, the huckster.'

'That makes no difference,' said Harry. 'The question is not whether he is a gentleman, but whether I am one; and no true gentleman will be less polite to a man because he wears a shabby coat or sells vegetables in the street, instead of sitting in the counting-house.'

Which was right?

A GROUP OF OXEN.

THE common ox is so well known to all of us, that we may not, perhaps, be prepared to find so many varieties of this animal spread over the globe. In the British Isles alone there are oxen so different

that a child might look upon them as members of different families. The oxen of other countries are often very unlike our own. The Indian ox has a large hump of fat upon his shoulders, and seems to carry the head higher than those of Great Britain. The auroch, instead of owning the same mild temper as our home animals show, is justly regarded as a wild beast not to be carelessly approached. By many people the auroch is looked upon as the stock from which our own cattle have descended, but it stands much higher upon its legs, and, moreover, it has an extra pair of ribs. In olden times the auroch seems to have roamed all over Europe, but now it is only in the forests of the Caucasus and Lithuania that a few specimens can be found.

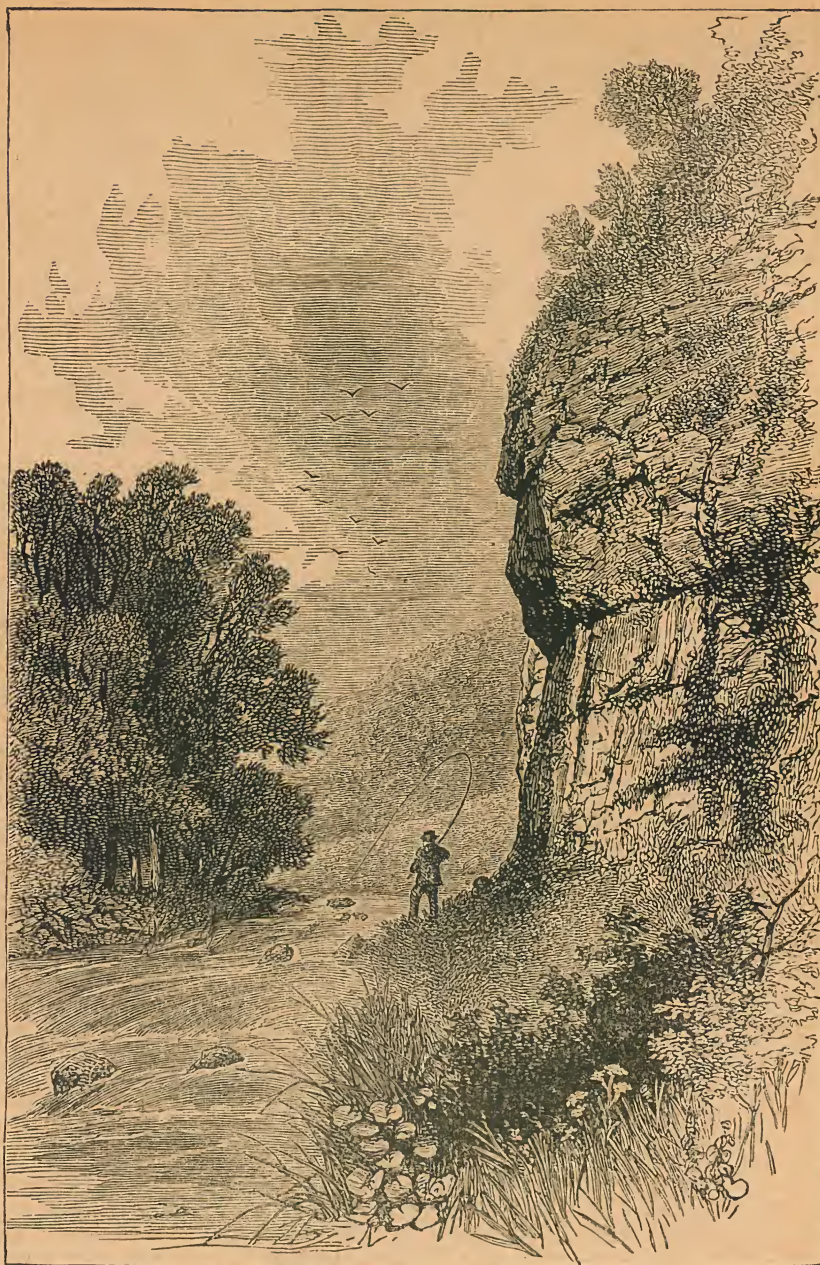
Books of travel have made us familiar with the figure of the American buffalo or bison, which once existed in immense numbers on the prairies, but is fast being driven to the more difficult parts of the country. As civilisation increases the bison will become as rare in North America as the auroch already is in Europe. The Indian buffalo is now to be met with not only in that country, but also in Egypt and the southern countries of Europe. Although of very uncertain temper, they are largely used for domestic purposes, and their milk is much praised. The wide-spreading horns of the Cape buffalo give it a very formidable look when seen at home in the plains and forests of South Africa. But no member of the ox family has so strange an appearance as the yak, or grunting-cow of Thibet. Its outline is ungraceful, and the masses of long hair, hanging nearly to the ground, give it a most ungainly appearance. And yet it yields to none of the oxen in usefulness. It is said to make a patient beast of burden, carrying heavy loads for long distances; its rich milk is a staple article of food; the long hair is spun into rope, or woven into a cloth; and the bushy tail supplies fly-floppers for the Indian plains.

A. R. B.

A MISTAKEN NATURALIST.

AN amusing story is told of a young Scotch doctor in India who was a great observer of the natural history of that country. It seems he was riding out early one morning, and suddenly caught sight of a harmless water-snake, which, to his sight, appeared furnished with horns projecting from the sides of its head. Hastily dismounting, he called the attention of his groom to the strange creature, and immediately gave chase, but, much to his disappointment, the novel-looking reptile got away. On reaching the mess-house, he related what he had seen to his brother officers, and observing the doubts expressed in their faces, forthwith called the groom to confirm his story. The man came, but, on being closely questioned, afforded considerable merriment by explaining that the horns on the snake's head were simply nothing more or less than the hind legs of a frog the creature was in the act of swallowing when surprised by his master. It was a long time before the poor doctor heard the last of the horned snake.

O. W.



LION'S HEAD ROCK, DERBYSHIRE.

DERBYSHIRE is famed for the beauty of its many dales. One of the most picturesque is Dovedale, where the river Dove, beloved of anglers, flows between Derbyshire and Staffordshire. On the Staffordshire side of the river the rocks rise in abrupt and imposing masses, their bleached and hoary fronts seamed and channelled by countless rents and fissures: here riven, jagged, and shattered, there roughened with furze or green with moss and trailing ivy. Here and there huge isolated cliffs of most varied forms thrust themselves out through the

spreading thicket—some pinnaced and castellated, others springing up almost like the spire of a church, others rugged and shelving, bedecked and fringed with ferns and briers.

Many of the rocks in these Derbyshire dales have had names given them by the neighbouring peasants from some fancied resemblance—as, for instance, the 'Lion's Head Rock' shown in our engraving—such names being useful to identify certain spots in these long and lonely glens, so that anglers or others may have trysting-places.



The Rainbow.

THE RAINBOW.

MY heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky :
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old
Or let me die.
The child is father of the man,
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

WORDSWORTH.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 363.)

WELL,' said Green, 'no sooner had we got into that field than we saw a tremendous bull coming towards us at full gallop——'
'It was a trot just now,' put in Choundy.

'Well, it began in a trot, you know, and then got into a gallop. And at first I proposed we should make a stand and try to frighten him off, but Baylis was for running——'

'You said it was A. Sharp just now.'

'Well, er—, the fact was it was both. And then we cut away like steam, and shinned up the trees; and we had a very narrow shave of it, and no mistake, for he got to our tree just as I grabbed the first branch——'

'You said it was the other tree just now.'

'Did I? Then I must have been mistaken. It was mine, and no mistake, and didn't he kick up a row when he just missed me! Well, we were up there no end of a time, till it came into my head to crawl out to the end of the branch and drop over. It was a drop, too! Quite ten feet if it was——'

'You said eight just now.'

'Nonsense! But, any way, we dropped it and made for home, and didn't Sharpies bellow after us, oh, no!'

'No, we didn't,' said the elder; 'we were glad to see you go.'

'Oh, yes, of course. Well, you had plenty of time to yourselves, anyway, and nice company to come home with.'

Sharp disdained to notice this remark and withdrew to a corner, where he busied himself in arranging the heads of his story for the Doctor's ear on the following day. He saw clearly enough that it would be unwise to say anything about the 'Laurel Tree' visit, as it did not necessarily come into the adventure on Mr. Willis's farm. That he and his brother would be well punished he did not doubt, but that he would drag his companions in for it also he was quite resolved.

However, things turned out contrary to his expectations. Dr. Swanage did not enter at any length into the matter.

'Sharps, you were found trespassing by Farmer Willis on his land, and he believes you were stealing his apples and other fruit during the afternoon. Have you anything to say?'

'Please, sir, we weren't the only ones; there was —'

'Never mind who else there was, that doesn't lessen your guilt. Did you do it?'

'Please, sir, it wasn't we who took the pears; it was —'

'Did you eat them?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Very well. I don't consider that you have bettered your case by trying to bring other people into trouble. I shall cane you for this.'

And cane them he did, in a way that made them for a long time afterwards loathe pears as being associated in their minds with the results of that unhappy afternoon.

You can well believe that natures like those of the two Sharps considered their punishment as very unjust, because it was unshared by Baylis, Green, and Clarkson, and their anger against these three only awaited for some convenient opportunity to display itself openly.

The latter seemed quietly indifferent to their attitude towards him, and this irritated them the more.

'You'll get it some day for cutting off and leaving us up that tree, and then letting us bear all the blame,' said Sharp the younger at an early opportunity.

'Was it my fault that we bagged the pears?'

'No, it wasn't.'

'Oh, that's all right then,' was the placid reply; and they got no more satisfaction from Clarkson.

Green, being very fearful of future plans against his peace, sought to regain their favour, and found the task an easy one, since they were glad to find somebody ready to speak with them and be seen in their company. As Baylis showed no signs of coming to terms they vented most of their rage upon him. He, however, went on as before, nobody's friend, and repelling the advances of the only one who really cared to seek his company.

In a week's time he began to think it well to put in an appearance at the 'Laurel Tree,' in order to prevent Martin noticing his absence, and sending a request for more money. Green or Clarkson would, no

doubt, have been ready to join him in a visit, but he did not care to tell them the business which made it necessary for him to go, and he therefore set out alone on the very next Wednesday afternoon.

Passing through the playground he met Battersley, who was also alone, and who came up in the same kindly way as of old.

'Halloa! Going off by yourself? Let me come; I don't know what to do with myself this afternoon.'

'Well, thanks, I think I would sooner go alone.'

He hated himself for answering in this way one who evidently spoke sincerely and with a kind intention; but what, he asked himself, could he do? It would be madness to let Battersley know about the debt, although, on the other hand, it would have been a great relief to have had somebody to whom he could open his heart on that disagreeable subject.

But the words were spoken, and the thoughts of his mind went for nothing.

Battersley could not force his company upon him after this, and with an 'All right, old boy,' he turned on his heel and went back towards the school.

All the way to Winterham this incident was in Baylis's thoughts, and at times his mind was almost made up to go straight to Battersley on his return, and say he was sorry for it. But then Pride rose up with a dozen reasons against this. What would the Sharps say? They would be sure to hear of it, and would make great fun of his 'caving in like that to Battersley.' And perhaps Battersley would go around boasting about it. He did not at all believe in his heart of hearts that he would do anything of the kind. But Pride bade him remember that such a thing was just possible, and then how very foolish he would seem in everybody's eyes! And then again, suppose Battersley chose to turn nasty and say he didn't want to have anything more to say to him, how would he look in the eyes of other people then? This, too, his better thoughts told him was not at all a likely thing. But Pride easily made it out to be possible, and in cases like this we always seem to believe things which at other times would look utterly ridiculous. So Baylis soon worked himself into a rage at the possible result of an interview with Battersley which he never intended should take place. Like a good many other people under similar circumstances, he went through an imaginary conversation in which Battersley said all the ill-natured things which Pride suggested to him, and he replied with all the bitterness concocted during his walk.

These thoughts occupied his mind during the whole of the walk to Winterham, and left him no time to think of what he should say to Martin if he asked for more money.

Just as he arrived at the 'Laurel Tree,' the elder Sharp came out of the door, evidently in haste.

'Oh, it's you, is it?' said that worthy, as he passed on.

Baylis, for a wonder, found nobody in the bar, and therefore walked through to their usual resort. This was occupied by a party of Winterham youths; so he left it at once, and, still seeing nothing of Martin, came away rather relieved than otherwise, and made the best of his way back again to St. Egbert's, but without walking fast enough to overtake Sharp.

CHAPTER XVII.

BEFORE the evening was past on which Baylis paid that solitary visit to the 'Laurel Tree,' the inn-keeper himself arrived at St. Egbert's in hot haste and demanded to see Dr. Swanage.

A rumour of this soon made its way through the school, and Baylis at once concluded that Martin had come on business concerning him.

Dr. Swanage did not receive his visitor with very great pleasure, having long had a suspicion that he encouraged St. Egbert's boys at his house. But Martin's tale demanded his closest attention. It was to the effect that during his absence that afternoon a sum of three pounds in silver had been stolen from his bar, and that the thief must have been a St. Egbert's boy. How did he know that? Because a neighbour opposite had seen everybody who went in and out during that ten minutes, and they were all boys from the school. The skittle-alley had been engaged all the afternoon by some Winterham young men, who, according to the lad who waited on them, had not left that place during that time.

Certainly the case looked black. But surely people might have walked in without being noticed?

He did not think so, in fact felt sure of it. It was quite by accident that the place had been left untended. Such a thing did not happen once in a year.

Well, and who were the boys he suspected? Martin hesitated, he did not like losing good customers, and yet three pounds was a sum not to be despised. So he gave up the names. He found on inquiry that Nicholson, Grant, the elder Sharp, and Baylis had all passed through the bar during that time.

'Very good,' said the Doctor; 'I will send for these lads.'

Accordingly these four were hastily summoned from the school-room.

'Now,' said the Doctor, 'Mr. Martin lost three pounds in silver from his bar yesterday at a time when it is stated only you four were seen there. Now at what hour were you each there?'

If any of the party had wished to tell a falsehood they knew quite well that it would have been found out by the evidence of others who had seen them. They therefore answered truly.

'Very good,' said the Doctor; 'the hour corresponds exactly with that given by Mr. Martin. Now do any of you know anything of this matter?'

They all replied in the negative; Nicholson rather haughtily, as having arrived at a place in the school which ought to have protected him against such imputations; Bruin Grant sulkily, with a vague idea that trouble was in store; Sharp indignantly, in many words; and Baylis confusedly. But then he had such reason to fear the exposure of his transactions with the inn-keeper.

'Very well,' said the Doctor. 'Now have you any reason to suspect anybody, Mr. Martin?'

The inn-keeper answered with a wavering look at Baylis that he 'didn't know as he had.'

'Then I do not think it can serve any good purpose for you to remain here longer. If you find any more evidence by all means let me know. I shall do my

best to find out the culprit, although being far from certain that it must have been one of my boys.'

Mr. Martin said 'Good-night, sir,' and shambled out.

Then the Doctor turned to his four pupils, and began a long lecture.

This suspicion, he told them, was the natural result of frequenting low places of amusement. Whether or not one of them was a thief, he was quite resolved to punish them for going to a forbidden house, and going regularly, as was clearly stated by Martin. If one of them really was the culprit, he urged him to confess at once, so that restitution could be made and as much disgrace as possible saved to himself and the school. If that was done he would act as leniently as possible towards him, but if the guilt was brought home in any other way he would feel obliged to expel the lad from the school. As it was he had no course open to him but to punish them all. They would each stay in during the next four half holidays; that was for visiting a forbidden place. Whether or not he should take further steps would depend on what more Martin might have to tell him. With this he dismissed them.

No sooner were these safely out in the corridor than Nicholson turned angrily upon the two younger lads.

'Now then, which of you was it did this? Out with it.'

'I'm not a thief any more than you are,' replied Baylis, stoutly, and received a beating for his pains.

Sharp seized the opportunity presented by this diversion to escape to the schoolroom, where he was soon called on to say what had happened. He was not at all loth to tell the story, and dwelt with all the correctness of a person to whom his half-holidays were very dear, on the iniquity of being kept out of them 'by some thief.'

A good deal of indignation was freely expressed against the unknown culprit, for everybody felt not only that the credit of the school was at stake but also that, until the guilty party was found out, one and all who ever went to the 'Laurel Tree' must to some extent lie under suspicion.

A good many were inclined to look with suspicion upon the elder Sharp; not that they had any special grounds for so doing, but simply because, as an obnoxious person, they would rather he proved to be the culprit than anybody else. However, Sharp was not at all disposed to let the blame rest upon him.

'Ask the other fellows,' he said to a deputation in their dormitory, who came to him on the subsequent evening, 'go and ask Nicholson and Bruin; or ask Baylis: he was there, too; I met him just as I was coming out of the 'Tree.'

'I don't believe Baylis would do it,' said Tosstop.

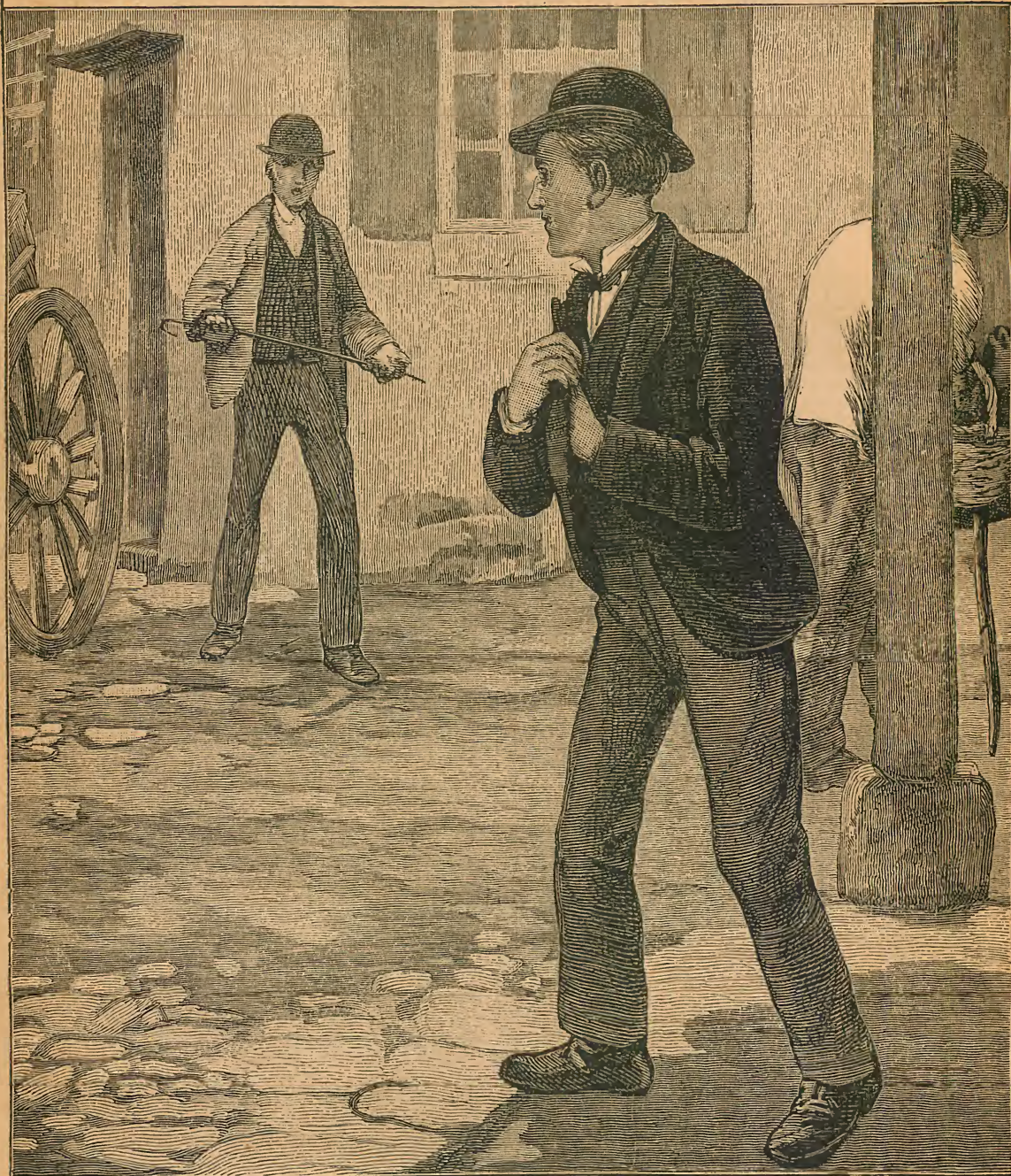
'Don't you?' sneered Sharp; 'well, he has a good deal more reason to do it than I have. Ask him about that money he owes there.'

'Owes Martin?' said Tosstop in surprise.

'Yes.'

The deputation looked at one another. This really seemed to put a new face on the matter. It would only be fair to ask Baylis a question or two after this. Freckles undertook to be spokesman on this delicate occasion.

(To be continued.)



Sharp leaving the "Laurel Tree" in haste.



Dog and Jackdaw. By HARRISON WEIR.



DOG AND JACKDAW.

ATAME jackdaw, by the name of Flynn, was kept by a farmer in Norfolk. His habits were those of a general teaser. He would pinch the cat's tail, or pull feathers out of the fowls. He had also the name of being a thief. He would hop off with anything, simply for the pleasure of hiding it. Yet for all this he had one favourite from whom he never stole, whom he never worried, and to whom whenever he got into trouble he would fly for protection, and that was Nelf, the house-dog. A mute friendship existed between the two, and the old dog never appeared more happy than when Master Flynn sat perched on the back of his head, and it was in the kennel that Jack often roosted, though at times he would take to a neighbouring tree, when the old dog would appear quite uneasy.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 375.)

BAYLIS, indeed, had already got to bed, and viewed his three questioners with an air of some surprise.

'Oh, we don't mean to be nasty, you know, only we want to clear up this business of Martin's; so we thought we would ask you to tell us all you knew about it.'

'I told the Doctor. Nobody else has a right to ask me.'

'Yes, I know; but then Sharp has just said that you owe that fellow Martin some coin, and so—'

'Look here,' said Baylis, sitting up, 'will you fellows just mind your own business?' You must have some cheek to talk to me like this.'

The deputation were rather taken aback. It was not the kind of answer they expected.

'Well,' said Freckles, 'you might just as well tell us for your own credit.'

'I can take care of my own credit, and when I want any help in it, I'll come to you.' And with this he composed himself to sleep.

The deputation withdrew, and held a little council together at Tosstop's bed-side. There they were joined by Battersley, Green, Choundy, and some others.

'I don't like the look of it all,' said Freckles, 'and yet I don't believe he would do it.'

'Nor I,' said Battersley, stoutly; 'and I shan't either.'

'That's all very well,' said Tosstop, with a judicial nod of his small head, 'but it won't clear him. I move that we hear what Sharp knows about this debt.'

This was at once agreed to, and Sharp at once came. He told the story of Baylis's debt, dwelling particularly upon the fact that the amount was more than he could pay in that term, and, indeed, in two or three terms at the rate suggested; but that he had said it would be all right.

The council looked at one another in a way that showed how this fact weighed with them.

Tosstop and his friends were very disinclined to accept the inference that Baylis was the guilty party.

'Has anybody seen much of Baylis lately? You used to be with him a good deal once, Battersley; have you been about with him lately?'

All eyes were turned on Battersley.

'No,' was the reply; 'I haven't spoken to him since Wednesday afternoon.'

'That was when it was done,' said Green.

'What did you see of him then?' pursued Tosstop.

'Next to nothing. I asked him if we should go out together as we were both alone. But he didn't agree.'

Sharp nodded his head significantly. It was clear that he thought this fact went against the accused.

But, although Baylis was not a favourite, yet nobody amongst the more influential lads seemed ready to brand him as a thief.

At last Clarkson made a proposition. 'What's the good of bothering about this? If you think Baylis is the man, send him to Coventry, that's all.'

'Yes,' said Tosstop, slowly, 'we might do that unless he can explain matters; but I think we ought to tell him.'

This proposal seemed to meet with general favour, and the deputation again waited on Baylis. He seemed to be asleep, but opened his eyes at their approach.

'I say——' began Tosstop. But Baylis stopped him.

'Are you come about the same thing as before?'

'Well, yes; but——'

'Well, just mind your own business, and leave me to attend to mine.'

It was not in the nature of boys who meant a kindness to stand this. But Tosstop answered quietly,—

'All right, we only thought we would tell you what we thought about it.'

'I don't want to hear. Just leave me alone, please.'

After this they could only leave him alone; but the feeling against him was very much increased by this scene, and several openly expressed their belief that he was the guilty party. An opinion of this kind was sure to gain ground. Everybody who disliked Baylis took it up for that reason; all who were too careless to form an opinion agreed with it, because it saved further trouble in the matter; and a great many fell in with the general belief because they were amongst those who think that what everybody says must be right.

Nicholson and his friend Bruin soon heard of the decision arrived at by Baylis's class-mates, and agreed with it as being a very right and proper thing.

'Now then, young thief, why don't you confess?'

This was the way in which they accosted him day after day. Sharp, who felt it unwise to go so far as this himself, persuaded three or four small boys to call 'Who bagged the money?' after Baylis. But the latter seemed to be losing his old ideas of right and wrong, for he fell upon one of the youngsters, and beat him so soundly that this annoyance was never repeated. Then he at once sought out Sharp.

'What did you tell Fletcher and those youngsters to call after me for?'

'I didn't,' said Sharp, who saw that a storm was coming.

'They said you did.'

'Oh, I dare say. Anything to get out of a licking.'

'All right,' said Baylis, savagely; 'you won't get out of a licking if I catch you up to any of those games.'

After this Sharp was more cautious, and even ventured a day or two later to make some friendly advances towards Baylis when nobody else was looking, but met with no success. Battersley alone disregarded the rule and spoke to his former friend whenever an opportunity occurred, seeing clearly enough that turning the cold shoulder upon a person even if really guilty was not likely to help him in coming to a better frame of mind. But he met with no kinder reception than the elder Sharp. Whatever might be the cause, it was quite certain that Baylis looked for and desired sympathy from nobody, and it was hard to go on making friendly advances to a person who treated them as so many insults.

And yet all this time a severe struggle was going on in Baylis's heart. He felt sorely the state in which he found himself, and longed for somebody to act a friend's part and lighten the burden. Yet when that somebody came, and proffered friendship, he put it all aside. Pride did it, picturing to him all manner of reasons why he should 'stand up for himself' all alone, and refuse all offers of help, and especially reminding him of 'what the other fellows would say' if he became friends with Battersley under these conditions. But although pride had its own way, it could not prevent him from being most thoroughly miserable. The cheerful letters which now and then came to him from home only helped him to increase that misery by showing how different his condition really was from what his brothers and sisters expected it to be. There was that horrible debt still hanging over him, without his having any prospect of being able to pay it before the following term, or even the term after. How he hated himself for being in the power of a creature like Martin! but yet could see no promise of early escape from his clutches. Thus, whilst outwardly putting on a bold front towards his old companions, he was within full of regrets and yearnings for better things. He remembered the time when some of them had turned coldly on Battersley, who had at last proved their suspicion unfounded. Now it was his own turn to be the outcast. But could he hope with equal success to establish his claim to their friendship instead of their contempt?

One day, after the expiration of the punishment awarded to the four boys who had visited the 'Laurel Tree,' he was thinking sadly enough over all these things, and over a letter he had that morning received from his favourite sister at home, watching in the meantime from a quiet corner a merry game of football in the field. Suddenly his better feelings for once got the better of him. The old stubbornness of will gave way, and he found himself doing what he had never expected himself to do under such circumstances, dropping two large tears into his lap. Then, before he knew what was happening, somebody had dropped upon the ground at his side, and a voice which he knew quite well said,—

'You can't escape me this time, old fellow. Let us talk it over quietly together.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was Battersley who sat himself down at the roots of the tree by Baylis's side on that—to them—eventful afternoon. There was nothing unkind or prying in his suggestion—'Let us talk it over together.' On the contrary, it came rather as a relief to Baylis, who did not at first find words to reply.

'It's awfully kind of you,' he said presently; 'but I don't think it's any good.'

'Oh, yes, it is, I know. Two heads are better than one, and we were to have been chums, you know. Let us have it all over.'

'There isn't anything to say. You know all about it.'

'What, about the debt, you mean?'

'Yes, Sharp told you the whole thing.'

'Well, that's true; but there's one thing he didn't say. Do you really owe it?'

'How do you mean?'

'Did you really have as much as would come up to what he has charged you?'

'Well, I don't believe I did. But I don't see how I can get out of it now.'

'I don't know about that; so there's one thing to see to. Now about this missing coin; it's a delicate point, I know.'

'But surely you don't believe I took it?'

'No, that I never did. But it has to be cleared up somehow.'

'Yes, of course, if I'm to come straight before the rest of them.'

'So we must do it.'

'It's awfully good of you, old boy,' said Baylis, smiling in spite of himself.

'Oh, we will manage it all right. I shouldn't be surprised if we came to do a little of the amateur detective business, like they do in some of the novels, you know.'

There was another laugh at this, and a more lively one than the last. Really they were getting on wonderfully well together considering the long estrangement!

'I tell you what,' continued Battersley presently, 'we can't do better than ask Leslie to give us a hint or two about this.'

'All right; I'm ready if you think it will do any good.'

'Then let's go and find him now. He was in his study half-an-hour ago.'

They accordingly returned to the school, and found Leslie busy with a pile of manuscript before him.

'Oh, it's you two, is it? Come in. Up to my eyes in work, you see, and all for an ungrateful side. Here's the material for the next number of our Red Magazine, and nice stuff it is. Here's somebody, who thinks he's a poet, sends in half-a-yard of rhymes on winter, beginning:—

"The wintry chill is coming fast,
And we shall have the ice at last."

Then there's another young bard, writing regardless of expense on the best notepaper, who sings about his sweetheart:—

"Her lovely eyes,
Like gooseberry pies,
For attention cries,
My Milly."



Battersley and Baylis in conversation on that "eventful afternoon."

His affection rather gets the better of his grammar, you see. But that's a small matter with our school poets. This is better, you must allow :—

"Oh, bury poor Sharpies out of our sight,
Under the grassy ground,
Where laurel-trees grow, and tobacco plants blow,
And the bulls cannot raven around."

That shows some promise, although I seem to have heard something like it before, and shall have the place of honour in the poet's corner. And now what's the matter with you two ?

Battersley undertook to be spokesman, and at last told Leslie the story of his friend's troubles. Much of it was already known to him; but the full particulars were new.



"What's the cause of your wanting to get out of paying your debts?"

When the speaker had finished the story, Leslie sat in thought for a minute, his lame leg being thrown in his favourite way over the other.

'How much have you paid this fellow?' he asked presently.

'Fifteen shillings,' replied Baylis.

'Well, it strikes me that about covers all you really owe him. I should go down and put a bold face on

the matter. Say you are sure he stuck it on, and ask how much he will take to clear up the whole thing.'

'But suppose he won't make any reduction? I shall be worse off than ever then, because I shall only have put his back up.'

'Oh, don't you fear about that. I fancy you will find him ready enough to come to terms if you only show a good bold front.'

'All right, I'm ready.'

'Then you go and see him at once. You will have time to go to Winterham and back before tea. As to the missing money, that I can't say anything about, except that I don't see why he should be so sure it was one of our fellows.'

The two friends resolved to follow Leslie's advice, and set out for the 'Laurel Tree' at once.

Crossing the playground on their way they met Sharp, who, seeing them arm in arm, lifted his nose in the air in a very virtuous and dignified manner. Choudny, who also saw this strange spectacle, ran off to inform some others of their party, who were in the adjoining field, so that as the friends went on their way they had to pass under the inspection of Tosstop and his supporters.

It was clear that they looked with great suspicion upon this new friendship, and Battersley's nods or greetings were either returned very coldly or disregarded altogether.

Baylis could not help seeing this.

'Look here,' he said as they passed Clarkson and Green, staring with open-mouthed amazement on this familiarity, 'I'm not going to have this. I don't want you to get into all these fellows' bad books. Leave me to myself.' He spoke with something of the old bitterness, and tried to shake off Battersley's arm. But the latter was not to be denied.

'Never mind what those fellows say now. It will be all right presently.'

'Very well. But don't say it's my fault if they all cut you, too.'

'No, I won't say that, never fear.'

They were not very merry during the rest of the walk to Winterham, partly because Baylis was thinking of this new result of his errors, and partly because he had very little hope of doing good by the visit to Martin. However, Leslie's plan was worth trying, and with that he consoled himself.

Martin was found serving in his bar, and left it at a sign from Baylis, supposing that more money was in store for him. He went aside with them into his parlour with the cheerfulness of a man who expects good news.

'Glad to see you, young gentlemen. You're come to bring me some more coin, I know you are.'

'Well, we're not,' said Baylis, who was puzzled to know how to begin with his message.

'Well, maybe it's about that three pounds?'

'No, it isn't. It's about my debt to you. I want to know how much more you expect me to pay.'

'Expect you to pay? Why, every blessed shilling to be sure!'

'Well, I don't intend paying it.'

'Oh, you don't, don't you?' he sneered; 'then I shall very soon make you, young man.'

'Well, you can try; but I shall not pay.'

'And what's the cause of your wanting to get out of paying your debts?'

'Why, because I don't believe I ever was in your debt that amount.'

'Oh, that's it, is it? Well, I'll teach you better than that. I'll go to your master and see what he'll say when he knows about it.'

'All right,' said Baylis, 'if you're going to do that I may as well tell him myself. I know what he will say.'

Martin looked a little incredulous at this, so Battersley thought it time to put in a word.

'He means what he says, and you may depend Dr. Swanage will agree with what he is doing.'

'All right,' said Martin, savagely; 'let him. But I'll have my money though, all the same.'

'Then you won't agree to any reduction?'

'Not a penny.'

'All right, then you are likely to lose all the rest.'

'I'll take my chance o' that.' And with this he opened for them the door.

On the way home the conversation naturally turned on this interview and the effect it was likely to have. Baylis took rather a gloomy view of the affair, holding that Martin was certain to call on the Doctor at once, and that the latter might consider the offence sufficient ground for expulsion. Battersley, on the other hand, thought his conduct might become more reasonable when he had had time quietly to think the matter over.

It was agreed that they could not do better than report to Leslie what had taken place, and to his study they once more directed their steps. He was found still at work upon the manuscript magazine, looking with distracted air at an elaborate composition which from its size might have been a history of the universe. He pushed it aside at their entrance, and they told their story, ending with a request for further advice.

'Well,' he said, after a little thought, 'you want to know what to do. I say—Nothing.'

'But Martin will be around to the Doctor,' objected Battersley.

'Will he? I don't think he will. Just leave the matter alone until you hear from him again: that's my advice.'

A great many people who consult their friends never take their advice unless it agrees with their own ideas. But Baylis and Battersley were not amongst the number. This policy of doing nothing did not seem to them the best or wisest; but they were ready to be guided by one whose experience had been greater than their own. And so for the present they considered this matter settled.

By the time this second conference with Leslie was over it was the hour for tea, and the two friends went in together. Sharp was near the door as they entered, and made some jocose remark to Bruin Grant, at which that worthy was kind enough to laugh. Tosstop, Freckles, Choudny, Clarkson, and others came in, but nobody volunteered to speak either to Battersley or Baylis. It looked very much as though the latter was to have a companion in Coventry. But then that is a punishment which becomes very much more endurable when there is a companion in misfortune, so that the pair did not allow it to hinder their cheerfulness. And yet both felt this new state of things to be very hard. Baylis saw himself more than ever guilty in having brought this upon his friend. Battersley regretted it for Baylis's sake as well as because he felt keenly being thus cut off from his chums.

Sharp clearly looked upon the punishment of

Battersley as a most proper thing, and, on the score of it tried to curry favour with Tosstop and some others who had always avoided him.

'I'm jolly glad you fellows have taken up this business so well; you may depend —'

But Tosstop stopped him at once.

'Look here, when we want your praise or advice, we will ask for it.'

So Sharp went off defeated. Then he tried Clarkson, whose friendship he would gladly have again secured with a view to future 'Laurel Tree' excursions.

'I say,' he began, in a confidential tone, 'I am glad all the fellows are cutting Battersley. Aren't you?'

'I don't care a straw about it. Do you?'

'Rather.'

'Oh, that's all right then,' said Clarkson, as he turned to another lad.

But Sharp had one staunch ally in his brother, and these two made merry at the expense of the new resident at Coventry. They passed little notes to each other in sight of the pair, and laughed boisterously on receiving them; when together they indulged in little exchanges of looks and nods which almost seemed very funny to themselves; occasionally they even went so far as to speak to other—and smaller boys—of what was going on, and indicate the pair of outcasts by a contemptuous nod or two of the head.

One day this conduct nearly brought on a collision. The elder Sharp was seen at a distance evidently entertaining a party of youngsters with an account of Baylis's misdeeds. The latter was in a rather bad temper, and happened to be alone at the time. He marched straight across to the group and planted himself in front of Sharp.

'Now then, just say to your face what you were telling those youngsters.'

'You go on,' said Sharp: 'what business is it of yours what I say to other people?'

'A good deal, if it's about me.'

'And suppose it wasn't about you?'

'Yes; but I know it was.'

'Well, then, it wasn't.'

It was a falsehood; but Sharp seemed to make no distinction between what was true and false, he used whichever seemed most convenient at the time, and he had no scruples at all about sheltering himself behind an untruth when it could save him from a fight. It had that result on the present occasion, for Baylis left him at once, and Sharp went off rejoicing in his successful excuse for cowardice.

Tosstop and the others showed no such foolish enmity as this. They simply avoided the pair and all intercourse with them, but did nothing else to make their lives unhappy.

But, what was really to the two friends a greater source of trouble than this was the fact that no signs were apparent of the real culprit in the matter of Martin's money being found. They knew that until the guilt was brought home to somebody else they themselves would lie under a cruel suspicion, and it was to some discovery which should make their innocence plain that their hopes were most directed.

(To be continued.)

SMALL FEET.



AMONGST no nation has the admiration for small feet been carried to such excess as with the Chinese. The origin of the cruel custom, almost universal amongst them, of bandaging the feet of little girls, has been sought for in vain. It is said, however, by some, that very far back in their history a certain princess, remarkable for her beauty and intelligence, had exceedingly small feet. Her form being accepted as a model of grace, other women, less favoured by nature, tried to imitate her in every particular.

Finding, at last, that the shape and size of their own feet could not be altered, they turned their attention to their daughters', and began the practice of tightly bandaging the children's feet to stunt the growth. The custom still holds good, and where it has been neglected mothers are said to seek in vain for husbands for their daughters. Most of the Chinese women totter along in a way that suggests a fall at every step, but can yet be active when they wish, just as cripples often surprise us by their agility. To the eyes of Europeans the result is far from graceful, and the long torture necessary to produce the wished-for result sometimes ends in death. A. R. B.

A CHAT ABOUT SOME WORDS.

WHO would think that the word 'tawdry' had anything to do with a Saxon saint? Yet this is so. The shrine of St. Etheldreda, in the Isle of Ely, was much frequented in Saxon times; and, combining business with devotion, the pilgrims used to attend a fair hard by, called after the saint. At this fair, among many other things, coarse lace and other finery was sold, also called after the saint, but called by her shortened name—St. Awdry lace. 'Letters, like soldiers, drop off in a long march, says some one; so the lace became "Tawdry lace" in the dialect of the Eastern counties. From this anything gaudy, coarse, and of poor taste and material, has come to be called 'tawdry.'

If you ask old people what a 'spencer' was, they will tell you it was a kind of short jacket, worn many years ago. It was named after a certain Earl Spencer. 'Sandwiches' were the invention of a certain Lord Sandwich. Hence it was said that the one peer had invented half a coat, and the other half a meal!

The early French kings used to carry with them to battle the blue cope of St. Martin of Tours, as a talisman. The name of a cope, in Latin of that age, was *capella*; and the monks who took charge of the relic were called *capellani*. The place, also, in which the cope was deposited was called, like it, '*capella*;' hence, they say, come 'chaplain' and 'chapel.'

'Pheasant' comes from *Phasianus*, the bird of Phasis, a river in what was once called Colchis, now the Black Sea shore of Asia Minor, from which pheasants first came. Cherries, and their name too, first came from Cerasus, a town in the same district.

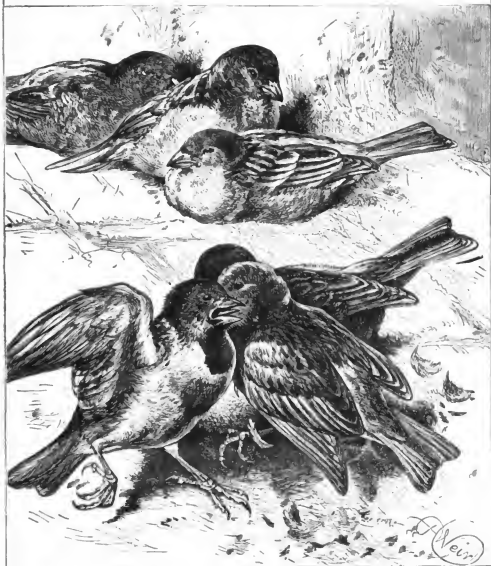
J. D. M.



Evening.

"Soon as the evening shades prevail
The moon takes up the wondrous tale ,

And nightly to the listening earth
Proclaims the story of her birth," — ADDISON.



Sparrows fighting for the best Place. By HARRISON WEIR.

SPARROWS.



IT is well known that sparrows are very fond of warmth; they will lie and bask in the sun, and seem to enjoy the heat of the hottest day in summer. Even their nests are lined with feathers and wool, so that their little ones may not feel cold.

Not long ago there was a commotion on a house-top in the City, near St. Nicholas Lane; the cause of the hubbub was found to be that at the base of the chimney the tiles

and bricks were warm, so the sparrows were fighting for the best places, and the conquerors were seen soon after to be quietly resting against the bricks, enjoying, with half-closed eyes, the luxury of artificial heat on a cold day.

NIGHT IN INDIAN JUNGLES.

THERE is but little twilight in all tropical climates, hence, as the sun sinks below the horizon, darkness sets in rapidly, and though the animals and birds of day go to sleep, another set of living creatures awake and keep up the voices of Nature. Of course all have some duty to perform, but their waking up to such duties is not quite pleasant to those who would rather be at rest, and one living in the Indian jungles has to endure and put up with a variety of experiences which he would much rather do without. First, as darkness comes on and the lamps are lighted, one becomes aware of a somewhat musical humming, which proceeds from those minute pests of the tropics the ever-lively mosquito. Did these small tormentors confine themselves merely to humming, people might perhaps not care so much for them; but their sharp, venomous trunks soon penetrate the light clothing which one is compelled to wear during the hot weather and rainy season, and though the swinging punkah keeps the head and shoulders free from the hungry little bloodsuckers, they dig into your legs and feet through socks and other clothing in the most irritating manner. Even when you retire to rest a very careful examination has to be made of the inside of your protecting nets or curtain, for if but one of these active creatures find an entrance sleep is out of the question. Mayhap you are just falling off to sleep, when 'Bus! bus! bus!' comes the enemy, and a sharp prick on the tip of your nose starts you into angry wakefulness; you give a sudden slap at the injured part in the vain hope of crushing the assailant, but all in vain, for you only succeed in thoroughly rousing yourself, and in another instant a short buz, and again he has you, this time behind the ear or at the back of the neck. Perhaps you then lose your temper, and, bouncing up, you dash the towel you have taken to bed for the purpose wildly about all over the interior of the curtain; then, in hopes that you have rid yourself of the vicious intruder, you turn over and again compose yourself to sleep. No use. Again the tiny trumpet sounds, and a sudden, needle-like stab on the point of the elbow or other uncovered part induces you to resume the fight.

At length your efforts are successful, and you flatten the insect between the palms of your hands, and there are the crushed remains amid a small speck of your own abstracted blood. But though victory has been won the pain of the stings remains, keeping sleep at a distance for an hour, during which you may watch with satisfaction the havoc made among the mosquitoes that settle outside your curtain by the agile little brown lizards, half-a-dozen of whom scuttle about, devouring their prey in hundreds. The latter small reptiles abound, and help to keep down the numbers of night insects that infest all Indian houses, or bungalows as they are called.

But perhaps there are few mosquitoes in the part where you live, and you can sit out in the veranda to cool down before bedtime, in which case there will be plenty of sights and sounds to interest you. From the pools and puddles formed by the rain millions of frogs keep up an incessant croaking, which some people think has a chorus that sounds like, 'Pay me what you owe me! No, I won't! no, I won't!' In the midst of this hubbub comes a painful treble scream, and you know one poor froggy has been seized in the jaws of a snake; the noise of the others ceases for an instant or two, but is soon resumed, and is kept up the whole live-long night. Then, as you look out over the land, the air, close to the ground, is alive with myriads of fireflies, who flit about in all directions as if in the mazes of a quadrille or waltz. So brilliant is the display of these tiny natural lanterns that the surrounding objects can faintly be seen by their light. Bats rush to and fro among the clouds of these insects, and feed bravely, but without apparently diminishing their numbers. Within the bungalow you hear the occasional cry of the 'greckoe,' and also become aware of a deeper croak, and hear distinctly the movements of a big toad making the round of the dining-room, where, on the floor beneath the wall-lamps, he finds a plentiful supper on the half-burnt cockroaches that have flown at the lights. If you watch him for a minute it will be seen, that while munching the half-cooked victims he has all his eyes about him, and, with a louder croak than usual, hops rapidly off to a dark corner, whence comes an audible crunch as he swallows a huge locust or grasshopper in his powerful jaws. Harmless as is this monarch of the frog-tribe, he is an uncanny-looking object; for, when squatting on the ground, with his fat forelegs spread out, he measures fully six inches in height, and, though decidedly useful, has an unpleasant habit of retiring to rest and being found in all manner of unexpected places. Having cleared the floor of insects he will jump on to a chair, and thence to the table, appearing before your book or writing-pad with startling abruptness. Or, on going to bathe your warm face, you may find him seated in the wash-hand basin. He greets you with a deep croak, and flops out, upsetting the soap-dish, and alights on the floor with a thud which tells how well fed he is. Now and then he has to be emptied out from your riding-boots, and occasionally you may find him perched on your pillow, thus disputing possession of your bed; should you happen to fall asleep in the veranda-chair he will readily hop into your lap; or if you use a net hammock he sometimes interrupts your nap by coming plump on

to your face. In fact, he is rather too familiar altogether, and presumes on his usefulness to make himself at home.

Presently a sharp, wailing bark is heard in the distance, and, taken up by numbers, swells into a mingled chorus of yelps and howls that, coming nearer and nearer, sound rather alarming to a new-comer; but it is only a pack of jackals, who roam over the land at night in search of dead cattle and other carrion, and woe betide the benighted duck or fowl that has not secured a high-enough perch! Jackals are as big robbers, and quite as cunning, as our own foxes, and will prowl about the houses and farmsteads so warily that they are seldom in want of a supper; nothing comes amiss to them, but they generally keep out of the forests at night, being fully aware that tigers, leopards, hyenas, as also the larger snakes, are as partial to them as they are to smaller creatures. The jackal never cries when alone on business, but only when swarming in packs. When working on his own account he will sit for hours in a clump of grass watching a fowl-house, and when all is clear will scramble through the thatch or dig under the mat walls in a thoroughly workmanlike manner, making no noise; young goats, kittens, and puppies he has special liking for. But the pack sweeps by, and the prolonged howling dies away in the distance.

If you keep dogs they must be chained up well within the house; that is, English dogs, for the Indian dog is wide awake enough to know the danger of straying out at night-time, and there is nothing that a leopard will not brave to carry off a dog. I have known them to jump through an open window into a fully lighted room, and tear a dog away from a bedpost, chain and all. The leopard makes no noise, and will creep up to a veranda full of people without any one suspecting his presence. A gentleman was sitting in an easy-chair one evening playing with a little fox terrier; he rose to go inside the house, placing the dog on the chair, and had just reached the door of the room when there was a sudden rush behind him, the chair was overturned, there was a half-stifled yelp, and away bounded a large leopard over the veranda railings with the dog in his mouth, and was clear away in the darkness before any one had time to snatch up one of the guns, which are always kept loaded for such emergencies.

Should you want to read or write at night all manner of queer creatures disturb your studies, flying straight at the lamp. The white ant comes in hundreds, and, as they bound off the globe, take off their wings, like a visitor divesting himself of his greatcoat, and wriggle down on the floor to commence their attacks on all and every description of woodwork, from which they have carefully to be brushed each morning. Hideous insects and beautiful ones all rush in together, and the table next day, around the light, presents a funny assortment of singed wings, legs, and other remains, which afford interesting study for the microscope. You are perhaps deep in the most thrilling chapter of a tale when two or three huge beetles, about three times the size of a humble bee, pop in and sail round the room, making a noise like humming-tops in full swing. Suddenly they come down with a hard rap on their horny backs, and

lie kicking and sprawling till they regain their legs, and then, rising again, repeat their gymnastics as long as a light remains in the room. But another thud on the floor or table that has an unpleasant sound, like a soft piece of meat falling, makes you jump quickly to your feet and seize the handiest weapon, such as a shoe, flat stick, or anything of the sort that comes readiest to hand, for the new intruder is of the dangerous sort, being a huge, jet-black spider, with long hairy legs and a pair of vicious nippers containing a poisonous juice, that causes most intense pain when forced into you by the above mentioned nippers, or forceps, which is the proper name. You must be smart in the battle with this fellow, as he is quick in his movements, and, should you fail to kill him, he escapes into some dark corner or up among the grass of the thatch, issuing out when least expected. He does not always run from you, but frequently faces round, elevating his body, glaring with his black, beady, protruding eyes, and actually rubbing his forceps together as if eager for the fight.

But, at last, it is time for bed, and securely tucked inside the mosquito-curtain you are safe from all minor mishaps; that is, if your servant has been careful to ascertain that no undesirable bedfellows have hidden themselves in the clothes! If a fresh arrival, you lie long awake, listening to the sounds before mentioned, to which are added the occasional sharp bark of the 'mountjak,' or barking-deer, from the adjacent forest, the piercing scream of the fish-eagle, the croak of the night bittern, or the deep hoop, hoop, of the large owl, which latter night-visitor has an unpleasant habit of perching on the low roof. Nature at last asserts herself, and you sink into forgetfulness, for the time, of the many odd surroundings.

Your troubles are not yet over: should it be the commencement of summer, you are rudely aroused by the ever-present servants quickly shutting and fastening, with bamboo bars, the mat doors and windows, putting the wind covers on the night-lights, calling meanwhile to the people in the detached mat-built kitchen to put out or cover up the embers of the fire. Hastily jumping up, you aid in these hurried precautions, for the vivid flashes of tropical lightning, the low, rumbling thunder, growing each moment louder and louder as it comes nearer, and a queer moaning of the wind among the topmost branches, heralds the approach of one of those violent storms so common in hot countries; louder and quicker croak the frogs at the pleasing prospect (to them) of more wet; dogs yelp and bark with alarm; blacker and blacker grows the sky as you take one last look outside; and at length the typhoon is upon you. Sand, twigs, dead leaves, and all such light bodies, hurtle against the mat walls of the house; chairs or tables that may have been carelessly left in the veranda are whirled away into the darkness. Ancient trees, real giants of the forests, are shorn of their limbs or bodily uprooted; wild, startled cries from numerous birds and animals mingle in the uproar; the house shakes and vibrates under the force of the squall; in spite of all precautions, perhaps, the lamps are extinguished; the swaying of the roof dislodges all sorts of unpleasant creatures who have taken up their abode there, and ominous pats



The Leopard bounding over the veranda with the dog in his mouth.

on the floor and table tell of the sudden descent of scorpions and centipedes. Louder grows the voice of the tempest; a rushing sound is heard, even above the deafening peals of thunder, and hail, driven horizontally by the terrific force of the wind, adds to the terrors of the midnight hurricane. These storms seldom last long, and as the ice shower ceases the wind drops and doors are opened. In the distance can be seen the black storm-cloud pursuing its

course, the thunder dies away, the bright moonlight shows long rifts of hailstones welded into masses, and you resume your slumbers with the air deliciously cooled.

But storms are not the only disturbances which one has to put up with, especially in N. E. India. You may be reading, writing, or, maybe, fast asleep and dreaming of home, when, without the least warning, the house aways too and fro; chairs, tables, doors



A Storm in the Jungle.

and windows, rattle and jump about. You spring up, generally right through your mosquito curtains, and rush from the building with staggering steps, for the very ground is moving, accompanied with an indescribable rumbling from underneath, which is truly awful to experience. Men and animals, with affrighted cries, flee into the open; water in the lakes and rivers rises into waves, and in what is, perhaps, ten seconds, but appears so many minutes, all is still, and, for the time, the dreadful voice of the earthquake is hushed. Hindoos fling themselves on the ground, calling loudly on the heathen diety Ram! More sedate Mohammedans, startled for the nonce out of their gravity, invoke the protection of God, under the name of Allah. Every living thing seems to feel the mysterious influence of the subterranean disturbance.

O. W.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 383.)

CHAPTER XIX.

THE term was fast coming to an end. Christmas, with annual examination and prize-giving, would soon be upon them. And yet nothing was done. Martin, perhaps, despaired of seeing or hearing more of his money; but the recollection of the affair had not died out at school, nor did it seem at all likely to. The elder lads felt that a stain still rested upon St. Egbert's,

and that the matter could not be allowed to rest until that stain was removed. But the Doctor's efforts to find the culprit had failed, and the hope of his discovery seemed small.

The terminal examination was of enough importance to occupy most of the boys' attention; but even this was connected with the 'Laurel Tree' event. Baylis and Battersley, being cut off from the rest of the school, were thrown more than ever upon their own resources, and so paid extra attention to their books. Baylis had long neglected his work, but, stimulated by the example of his friend, began soon to regain his place in class, and to make such progress that the boys at the top began to look upon him as a dangerous rival. Battersley had long been near the top of the fourth; but it was nevertheless regarded as a shame that a boy who had, so to speak, played the traitor by disregarding their sentence, and getting into close friendship with a boy sent to Coventry, should be likely to carry off their chief prize. The others, therefore, exerted themselves to the uttermost to prevent any such catastrophe. Toss-top applied himself to his books with extraordinary diligence at various times. But such fits rarely lasted with him more than two or three days; then he skipped off in search of some other attraction, composing poems in honour of the chief candidates, or for the pages of the Red Magazine. Freckles was a much more dangerous candidate; and even Clarkson, with his apparently careless way, was not a person to be despised. Green had no hope or wish to put himself forward, but contented himself with

offering friendly advice to the various people in whose success he was interested.

'Grinding again?' he said to Tosstop, finding him in a corner of the playground with a book one day. 'Take care you don't do too much of it.'

'No fear of that,' said Tosstop, cheerfully.

'Oh! I don't know about that. Fellows think they won't, but they do. Why, I remember one week at my old school doing so much that I actually lost my appetite, and could hardly touch a thing for weeks!'

'Nonsense!'

'Fact, I assure you. Why,' continued Green, warming to his subject, 'my people sent me down a hamper with some things in just then, and, instead of my being able to have a jolly good tuck-in on the quiet, I was obliged to give them away to the other fellows!'

'No?'

'I was, indeed.'

'Then I expect it was the first and last time they had much of yours.'

'Well,' said Green, deceived by the friendly tone of his questioner, 'you are about right, you know. I'm uncommonly fond of good things when I get them.'

Clarkson received Green's advances very placidly, and, being assured by him that he wished him every success in the coming examination, replied with his usual calmness, 'Oh, that's all right then.'

Freckles was the only person who did not seem to like Green's attentions, the latter having more than once ventured to give him advice as to his exercises in a way which he felt bound to resent.

'All right,' said Green; 'if you won't take my advice, you see if it isn't wrong; and then that fellow Battersley will be taking you down.'

'Well, what if he does?' replied the exasperated Freckles.

'What if he does? Well, I never! never! There's a way to answer a fellow who is giving you some advice for the good of the community!'

'I don't want your advice.'

'Oh, all right,' said Green in an injured tone; 'if it comes to that I can take it elsewhere.' And with this he left Freckles to his fate.

When the next day came, and the latter was reprieved for his exercise, Green was in ecstasies.

'Of course! I told him how it would be. That comes of not taking my advice.'

Under the excitement caused by preparation for the coming examination, Green and the Sharps once more became friends, and long anxiously sought for some plan which might satisfy their desire to be revenged upon Baylis and Battersley, whilst also affecting their school work. But they were unable to think of any plan which promised hope of success. They therefore practised various small acts of annoyance which might, they thought, tend to the same end. Sharp called Martin of the 'Laurel Tree' to their aid, by speaking to him about Baylis. He was then in ignorance of the visit paid by Battersley and Baylis, and of the latter's resolution to pay no more of the debt unless its sum total was very much reduced. When, therefore, he asked Martin how Baylis was getting on with his payments, the inn-

keeper flew into a passion, and revealed the whole state of the affairs.

Had he gone to Dr. Swanage? No, he hadn't, so he told Sharp. He knew his own trade too well for that. But he surely was not going to let the rest of the debt go? No; he was going to get it when he could. But Baylis had said he could pay no more that term, in any case; so it was no good pressing him.

When the conversation had got thus far, Sharp laughed aloud.

'No more money! Why, he had plenty the other day. He's taking you in.'

'A regular sell, and no mistake,' added Green.

Mr. Martin vouchsafed no answer to these taunts, but stored them in his memory, and resolved to at once remind Baylis of the debt. A good deal might be done by careful pressure. The consequence of this was, that on the following day a small and very dirty boy presented himself in the playground, and asked for 'Mister Baylis.' Having been pointed out the object of his search, he handed him a scrap of paper and went off.

There was a good deal of laughter in the playground at this incident. Even the lordly Nicholson stooped to make a jest, and asked Baylis whether it was a note from his sweetheart, and, if so, whether she was usually more particular as to the colour of her face and hands than her messenger was. Sharp guessed at the true state of things, and was in no small degree satisfied with the result of his visit to the 'Laurel Tree.' Baylis, too, knew at once from whom the message came, and put the packet into his pocket without reading it. Subsequently he went with Battersley into a quiet corner, and read Mr. Martin's communication. It was very brief, but requested the favour of an early visit from his debtor, and the immediate payment of at least a part of the money due.

They carried this precious document to Leslie, and asked for advice.

'Well,' said he, 'if you are sure you have been cheated, you can't do better than hold out. I should say it was a swindle.'

After this they took counsel one with another, and a new plan presented itself to Battersley's mind.

'Why not offer him so much to settle the whole thing?'

'For a very good reason—because I couldn't offer him more than a shilling.'

'But I can. I can lend you half a sovereign; and that might tempt him.'

'I shouldn't like to take it from you.'

'Nonsense, man! it's only a loan.'

Further objections were urged on one side, and removed on the other; and the discussion ended in this plan being accepted, and an early visit to the 'Laurel Tree' agreed upon.

They were rather fearful that the plan might be rejected with scorn by Mr. Martin; but it was not so. He received him in a sulky way, and heard the proposal at first in silence. At last he spoke.

'It's cheating, that's what it is; cheating a man out of his hard-earned money. But I'll do it, just to get rid of ye.'

The two friends were not young enough to believe

in Martin's excuse for settling the matter thus; but when his bill, duly receipted, was safe in Baylis's pocket, and they were on their way home, it seemed almost impossible to them that the matter should have thus been quietly settled.

On entering the playground on their way back they met Sharp, who so far relaxed his rule as to speak to them. He guessed where they had been, and wished to triumph a little in the success of his plan, never guessing what the result of their visit was.

'Ha! been paying your debts, I suppose?' This with a sneer.

'Yes, I have,' said Baylis, civilly.

'Very likely.'

'Perhaps you would like to see the receipt;' and with this he exhibited that notable document, which was a discharge in full of all claims against him.

Sharp glanced at it, and then went off without speaking. He speedily found a chance of taking Tosstop aside, and telling him the news that Baylis had paid his debt to Martin.

'Well, suppose he has?' asked Tosstop, who had never got over his dislike to the Sharps.

'Why, where did the money come from?'

'How should I know?'

'Can't you guess? How about that money that was bagged?'

Tosstop's look of indifference changed immediately to one of interest.

'But if he had that coin, why didn't he pay it before?'

'Why, of course, it would have been more noticed then. He thinks it has blown over by now.'

'And Battersley was with him?'

'Rather. And knows as much about it, I'll bet, as Baylis himself.'

'Well, it's rather queer. I never knew a fellow here who had more than a shilling or two in his pocket by the end of the term.'

Freckles, when consulted, was of the same opinion. In fact, everybody agreed that the case looked stronger than ever against Baylis, and that Battersley must know something about it.

Meanwhile, the happy pair went on their way, unconscious of the verdict delivered against them. They certainly noticed that the sending to Coventry became strictly observed again, but did not try to think out a reason for it.

There were times, however, notwithstanding the relief given by the end of this debt, when Baylis was very downhearted, and talked of asking his father to remove him from the school.

'Everybody is against me,' he would say; 'and I have brought it on myself. The longer I stay the more trouble I shall get you into. I don't like it, after what you have done. I shall go.'

'No, you won't,' the other would say; 'you are going to stay and see this thing out, and not go away with this hanging over your head. My mother had a motto about that, and I would stick to it if I were you.'

And so these fits of despondency generally ended in fresh resolutions to persevere. He did not observe it himself, but the long weeks of comparative solitude were of great value to him. He was humiliated by

the kindness of his friend, ashamed of his own ill-temper, and the way in which he had been made Sharp's dupe, and resolved in at least some things to rise, by God's help, superior to his former self. He had plenty of time for self-examination, and the picture he saw was not one to be proud of. He recalled now, with regret, his ill-natured refusal to answer the questions once asked him about his debt, and would now have gladly hailed any such opportunity of clearing himself. But both agreed that such a statement, if now volunteered, would do little good.

Leslie saw something of this change in Baylis, and gave him an occasional word of encouragement, which was both welcome and useful.

'It will all come right in the end, you see,' he said one day. 'Just go on quietly doing your duty, and leave the rest to somebody else.'

It was a schoolboy's way of referring to a higher power than that of man; and Leslie, with all his lively sallies, was known to be a God-fearing lad.

Meanwhile, the elder Sharp was working to bring about a regular school trial of the two suspected persons. He got Bruin Grant to take his view of the question, who speedily secured the aid of Nicholson. Such a case was then laid before the sixth form, that the majority decided the trial ought to take place. Leslie was the only person who put in a good word for the accused; but he made no objection to the trial. It could do no harm, if it did no good.

Baylis and Battersley, whilst aware how many things seemed to tell against them, made no objection to the proposal. Leslie promised to act as their friend, and put their case in the best way possible; and there were no grounds for believing that the sixth, as a body, would not judge impartially in the matter. If their verdict was that the case had been made out, then the result would go before Dr. Swanage, who could, of course, act or not upon the information then supplied. Such trials had taken place in the school before, when notorious offences had been committed, and they had received a kind of formal sanction from the authorities.

So on Monday night Baylis and Battersley were told that their trial would take place on the following evening, in that very room where, in a previous term, the musical entertainment, of which we have heard, was conducted.

That evening, as Leslie was coming back from a short walk just before teatime, he saw an ill-looking youth hanging around the playground-gates. Without thinking very much what he was doing, he said,—

'Halloa, what are you looking for?'

'I'm waiting for the boy they call Sharp.'

'Which of them? There are two of them.'

'I think it's the biggest.'

The visitor seemed inclined to talk, and Leslie was tempted to ask another question.

'I'll tell Sharp you are looking out for him. Who shall I say it is?'

'You can say it's Doddridge. He owes me money, and won't be glad to hear it.'

'Ah! he's been running into debt at some shop, I suppose?'

'No, he ain't. I don't want to say what it is; but



Leslie coming back from a short walk.

I shall if he don't look out. It's been running on these six weeks now, and I've only got a half-a-sovereign out of him. But I'll have some more.'

'Ah! well, I might help you perhaps, if you were so inclined.'

'Oh, I don't want to split on him; but you tell him Doddridge is looking out for him. It will bring him to, I dare say.'

'I will. Good-night.'

'Good-night, and thank you.'

Leslie was late at tea that evening, and he spent the time in slowly stumping around the playground, engaged in deep thought.

Seeing Baylis and Battersley together when he went in, he gave them a cheerful nod, and later on bade them 'keep their pecker up,' whatever that remarkable phrase might mean.

(To be continued.)



Dr. Rabelais' Mule.

DR. RABELAIS' MULE.

RANCIS RABELAIS, a learned and witty French doctor who lived in the time of Francis the First, had a mule that he called Jan, or Jack. Hearing that the Faculty of Orleans granted the degree of doctor of physic for a small sum of money, and without any examination of the candidates, or even seeing them, Rabelais sent the usual fees on behalf of one Johannes Caballus, which, in Latin, means John Horse. It was

the custom at that time for learned men to Latinise their names, and Johannes Caballus had quite an imposing sound; but the wise professors were soon made aware of what a worthy member they had admitted to be one of their body, when they heard that Dr. Johannes Caballus was no other than Rabelais' mule, Jan; and in this way their practice of conferring degrees on ignorant pretenders was exposed, and they were made a laughing-stock to every one.

When Rabelais came to Paris, one day, he left Jan in the care of some printers' men, telling them not to let the animal want water; but as he forgot to give them anything to drink themselves, they also forgot to give poor Jan any, and he was neglected for three days. On the third day, which was Sunday, the mule wandered out to try and find wherewith to quench his raging thirst. A little school-boy, who ought to have been at church, spying him, got up on his back to have a ride; soon another truant scholar begged to be taken up behind him; and then two more successfully mounted. The grave animal, with the four little boys on his back, walked leisurely down the street, till he came near a church; and scenting the water in the basin in the porch, Jan bent his steps towards it. The terrified youngsters dug their heels in his sides, and cuffed him, and shouted at him, but all to no purpose, for he was deaf to all remonstrance; and only intent on quenching his thirst, he marched boldly into the church, with the four urchins on his back. It was about the middle of the sermon: and when the congregation saw Jan and his living freight, they took him at first for a ghost. Great was the dismay of the little truants at this unlooked-for termination to their ride! They scrambled off his back much quicker than they got on; and Jan was seized by the sexton, and taken to the pound; and his master, being a notorious joker, was suspected of having contrived the matter himself, and was heavily fined.

A. R.

TROPICAL RAIN.

VERY often you cannot go out either for a walk or to play because it is raining, and perhaps feel inclined to grumble and complain at the weather that, though it prevents your enjoyment, is doing an immense amount of good to the earth.

I wonder how you would like to live on the top of an Indian mountain, at a place called Sorapoonjee, where the rain measure shows that it rains fourteen times as much in the year as it does in Europe, although the rainy season lasts but six months. On

the 18th of June, 1876, as much rain fell in this spot (which is nearly double the size of Hyde Park) during that afternoon as falls in England the whole year round. Such an incessant patter, patter comes down on the bare rock—for, as you can well imagine, the earth has long since all been washed away—that, listening to it as you lie comfortably tucked up in bed, you are apt to imagine half-a-dozen fountains are playing round the house.

The people who live in this strange place go about their business protected by rain shields, made of palm leaves, for no cloth or silk umbrella could stand such pelting. These shields are shaped like the bowl of a spoon, and children, when the wet season is over, turn them into boats to play with.

DAY IN INDIAN JUNGLES.



day dawns in the Indian jungles any further indulgence in sleep is out of the question, from the multiplicity of sounds and strong light. It is no use trying to shut out either, for close dark curtains would render the consequent heat unbearable, so up one must get and hurry from the bedroom

to the veranda, where, sitting in your dressing-gown and sipping the morning cup of tea, you have ample opportunity to watch awakening nature. The last prowling jackal, with a final prolonged howl, has betaken himself to his lair in some disused drain, or under the roots of an ancient tree—anywhere, where secure from disturbance he may sleep off the fatigues of the previous night's excursions, and dream, mayhap, of future banquets on dead cattle or other dainty bits of carrion. The ever-present crows, in immense numbers, congregate about the premises, they hop and flutter about everywhere, and sharp eyes and quick actions are needed to guard against their abominable thieving propensities; they hop in the veranda and sidle close up to your chair with their heads knowingly cocked on one side, looking up at you with a most impudent expression in their jet bead-like eyes. Should you leave the chair for a minute, over goes cup and saucer, and one will fly off with the spoon; soon, however, to drop it when finding it too tough even for his digestion. They perch on the window-sill and take rapid note of the contents of the room, especially in the preparations for early breakfast, till the table-servants, in self-defence, draw down the blinds of split bamboo; then they betake themselves to the cook-room (which is always built some little distance from the house), round the door and windows of which they hover on the chance of picking up stray tit-bits thrown therefrom. One perhaps pounces on a bone, and then comes an exciting chase, such as 'caw, caw, cawing,' flapping of wings, pecking, and dodging in and out among trees, till the lucky finder either beats off all

competitors, or boldly swallows the veritable bone of contention, and thus ends the noisy dispute. House dogs suffer great persecution at the hands, or rather beaks, of the Indian crow. If doggy trots off to bury a bone for crunching at a more convenient season, his wary tormentors follow him closely, resorting to all manner of provocation to make the poor animal drop his prize; frequently they will actually go the length of twitching him by the tail, or lighting for an instant on his back; one, perhaps, bolder than the rest, will flap him in the face, and should he so far forget himself as to snap at them for such familiarities, alas! the bone is gone in a moment: but, if deaf to all persuasion, he reaches a convenient spot for a larder, he must be particularly careful to securely bury it, for unless well done, as soon as his back is turned busy beaks and claws soon rake it up. Sometimes, when the crows get too troublesome, it becomes necessary to bring out a gun, then off scatter the black flock in all directions, creating a terrible din. If you fire and drop one, down swoop the others on him, and, paying little regard as to whether he is dead or only wounded, quickly tear him to pieces and gobble him up.

Besides the crows, other early morning visitors are the handsome hawks and kites, but they are almost as troublesome and bolder. Puppies, kittens, chickens, and similar small fry, must not stray outside the shelter of the houses, or their lives are not worth one minute's purchase. Everything coming from the cook-room to the bungalow has to be carefully covered up; and, should the birds be numerous, it is necessary for the servants to carry a stick to beat off these aerial robbers. If afforded a chance, they swoop down with a rustling swish and unerring aim, clearing a dish in an instant. But breakfast finished, it is time for work, and a stroll or ride through an Indian tea plantation, provided the weather is not too hot, is most enjoyable. The first thing to be done is to muster all the labourers, men, women and children, setting each their appointed task for the day; then the sick have to be attended to: but that last matter is soon settled, for people who live in the open air are not much troubled with illness. As you ride to and fro among the bushes, numbers of the sprightly little bulbuls fly twittering about, picking up insects, thereby doing an immense amount of good. The bulbul is a pert, pretty little bird, about the size of a sparrow, with a smart black crest sprouting from the back of his head, and bright scarlet feathers under his tail. He has been called the Indian nightingale, but why I cannot say, for he does not sing either night or day, though few Indian poets fail to introduce him into their verses.

But having seen every one set to work we turn our attention to the jungles, and dismounting, plunge into the forest gun in hand. High overhead flocks of green parquets, hundreds together, circle above the trees making a most horrid screeching; doves, both plain and ring, rise as we push on, but are so tame and numerous that one takes little notice of them. From the topmost branches comes the deep boom of the woodpigeon, very much larger than his European representative; the noisy but beautiful peacock-pheasant (called the polyplectron, from the two or three spurs he is armed with on each leg),

cackles incessantly in the underwood, while the whole place resounds with the sharp shrill crow of the jungle-cock—little wild bantams. A handsome green pigeon flits hither and thither, and the tumbling dyal—a small black-and-white jay—as he goes through his performances seems as if about to descend plump on to the ground, but recovering himself when within a few feet of it shoots up again to a great height, alternately rising and falling without any apparent purpose beyond exercising his wings.

The sweet clear note of the Indian mina—a beautiful black jay—that when captured and taught talks as well, if not better, than any bird known, comes floating through the glade, and other feathered songsters make up a scene of life and interest. Brilliant butterflies and moths flit here and there, varying in size from the gigantic atlas moth, who measures six inches across the wings, down to a tiny little pale-blue specimen scarce as large as a three-penny piece. The queer-looking leaf-and-stick insects fly from bush to bush, giving one the idea that the trees themselves are bringing forth living things: lizards, from the little fellow we have become acquainted with in the bungalow, up to the unsightly, but nice-tasting—when properly cooked—iguana, who attains the length of four to five feet, and seems as much at home among the branches as upon the ground, or, for that matter, in the water either. The chameleon also stalks solemnly from twig to twig, darting his long tongue out with lightning-like rapidity, as some careless winged insect incautiously flutters within reach. Now and then sundry of the creatures drop upon you, but their uncouth appearance is the worst part of them, and the majority are perfectly harmless.

Perhaps the most curious of all the lizard tribe is that which is furnished with what at first might be mistaken for wings, but which are merely membranes like the large side-fins of the flying fish, that enable the reptile to shoot through the air in the same manner as the so-called flying squirrel does. This little creature runs up trees and bushes and then darts down, looking in mid air as if really flying; but, as he cannot beat the air like a bird does with its wings, he can only take his flight in a downward direction, but so quick is he that he can catch his prey in his flight. Ages ago when the world was young there was, as you have been told in the pages of *Chatterbox*, some time back, a much larger lizard of this description, called by the Greek name *Pterodactyle*, meaning fingered wings; it is perhaps just as well that this huge dragon no longer exists, for he would be a formidable monster to meet in the jungles, which contain quite enough uncanny creatures without him. Though perfectly harmless, the present little flying dragon has, when by chance he alights on you, an unpleasant habit of clinging pretty firmly with his hook-like claws, and some force is needed to remove him. Splendid jet black squirrels leap from bough to bough, and when followed lie so close that it is difficult to detect them in the dim shade cast by the forest trees. As we press farther into the leafy labyrinth animals multiply. Anon the light shaking overhead makes us aware of the presence of the small brown monkeys, who scamper and jump among the high branches in large numbers, chattering

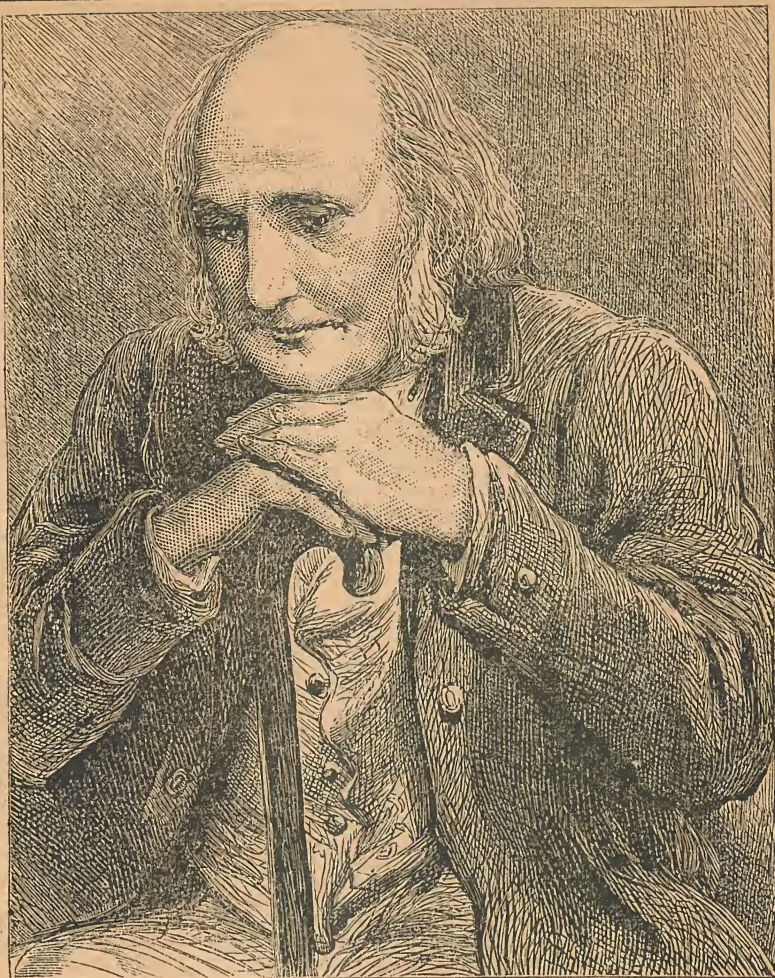


"Fiddles" rescued.

in fine style, half in fear, half in anger. Suddenly a heavy bough sways about, and on looking up you catch sight of a big fawn-coloured monkey, standing four feet high: a comical object he appears with his long tail, black face, and fringe of white beard and whiskers. Though chary of attacking full-grown people he is dangerous to children, and when the female has been surprised with her baby has been known to plump down suddenly on a young Indian

and maul it terribly with teeth and paws. Once a big fellow, who evidently did not see me behind, pounced down out of a clump of bamboos and caught my little dog by the tail, and ran up a tree with him, so I had to fire a charge of shot before he dropped poor Fiddles, who, between the double influence of fright and the tumble, howled most dismally for a long time after reaching the ground.

(Concluded in our next.)



Only Waiting.

'ONLY WAITING!'

AN aged man who lived in an almshouse, and often sat and sunned himself in the churchyard, was once asked by a lady 'What he was doing now?' He answered, '*Only Waiting*;' on which a little poem has been written, filling out the answer. Here are a few lines from it:—

'Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown;
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is flown;
Only waiting till the reapers
Have the last sheaf gathered home,
For the Summer time is faded,
And the Autumn winds have come;
Only waiting till the angels
Open wide the Golden Gate,
By whose side I long have lingered,
Weary, poor, and desolate.
Even now I hear the footsteps,
And their voices, far away;
If they call me, I am waiting,—
Only waiting to obey.'

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Continued from page 392.)

CHAPTER XX.



THE day of the trial seemed to pass very slowly, for everybody was anxious for the evening to come. A few were interested in the matter because they really felt the crime was one which ought to be brought home to somebody; others, because they had a personal animosity against one or other or both of the accused: and others, because it promised a little

cheap excitement, which would be a pleasant change from the monotony of school life.

Sharp and Green exchanged a few agreeable words of anticipation during the day.

'Oh, my! won't he get it after all!' said the younger brother.

'And he deserves it,' said Green, 'for trying to take us in all this time.'

'He won't try any games on with us again,' observed the elder Sharp. And with these cheerful anticipations they went about their work.

Baylis and Battersley had expected that Leslie would have taken counsel with them during the dinner-hour as to the best way of defending them, but he was not to be found anywhere. Just before tea he sought them out, bade them cheer up, and told them it would be all right, they need not fear.

Evening came at last, and the trial was to come off in the hour before preparation. The sixth moved off to the room first, and at once turned out, with some unnecessary violence, two or three small boys who had hidden themselves. Then Bruin Grant and his friend Stock were stationed at the door in order to prevent an unpleasant crush, since the room could not hold more than half those who would wish to be present. This pair discharged their duty in a very faithful way, pushing and cuffing any of the smaller boys who sought to make their way in, but behaving with proper respect to such of the lower school as were famous for their prowess. The sixth, who were to be judge and jury alike, sat upon a row of chairs at the top of the room, having an old ink-stained, chipped, and carved deal-table in front of them. The accused sat upon a form at their left, Leslie being accommodated with a chair at their side. Opposite to them Nicholson, as their prosecutor, was installed in another chair. The general public, amongst which the witnesses were included, sat upon various forms which Chips had been bribed to carry into the room. These, however, did not afford space enough for the whole company, and a struggle ensued as to who should possess them. As this state of things seemed likely to end in a free fight, two or three of the sixth plunged into the fray, ejected some of the noisiest, and soon reduced the rest to order.

Then everything was pronounced ready, and the trial began.

Nicholson first, as prosecutor, gave an outline of his case, beginning with Martin's complaint to Dr. Swanage, and going on to the various points which had led his class-mates to infer that Baylis was the thief, and Battersley an accomplice either before or after the act. Stress was only laid upon the fact that the former had refused to defend himself or give any explanation when invited so to do by a deputation of his own friends; and that he had recently been able to pay a large debt owing to Martin, although at the beginning of the term, after paying him fifteen shillings, he declared that he was penniless.

As these facts were carefully advanced in order by the accuser, many significant nods were seen, and from the whispered comments it was clear that everybody looked forward to seeing the matter soon settled.

But Leslie sat back in his chair, with legs crossed, and twitching the foot belonging to the lame one, as was his habit when in thought.

The opening statement over, Nicholson went on to call his witnesses. The evidence of the theft was taken for granted from the visit of Martin to Dr. Swanage. He then called for Bruin Grant, who detailed the scene before the Doctor on the evening

when the fact became known, and gave as nearly as possible the words in which Baylis denied the theft.

Then Leslie rose, stating that, with a view to shorten matters, Baylis was willing to let it be taken for granted that he had owed more than two pounds to Martin, so that they need not call evidence to that effect.

Tosstop was the next witness, and he detailed the efforts made to obtain a denial from Baylis, giving the replies made by him to their requests, which replies, Nicholson bade them notice, contained no expressed or implied denial of the accusation.

Freckles confirmed this statement, but neither he nor Tosstop was questioned by Leslie.

Then the elder Sharp was called and stood forward. He briefly ran over the story of the visits to the 'Laurel Tree' which produced the debt, mentioned Baylis's often-spoken-of difficulty in paying the sum, and then related how he had met the two companions coming into the playground, when they showed him the receipt for the money.

All this was very straightforward and plain. Leslie rose to cross-examine the witness.

'I think you were once rather thick with Baylis?'

'Well, not very.'

'And you fell out over a little matter in which a bull was concerned?'

There was a titter in court at this question, which was at once suppressed by Grant and Stock, who were now doing duty as ushers. Sharp made no reply, but expressed his scorn in his looks.

'You don't answer, so I suppose that is the case,' continued Leslie. 'And now let me ask you whether you have any knowledge of the source from which Baylis obtained the money to pay his debt?'

'Well, only, of course, what we all think —'

'Just so. Now is there any reason in your mind why Battersley should not have lent him the money?'

Sharp shrugged his shoulders.

'You mean, I suppose,' continued Leslie, 'that you yourself would never have lent money to a friend under such circumstances?'

'No, I don't,' was the snappish reply.

'Ah, well! it doesn't matter. I want to ask you this now: do you think there is anybody else who knows about this money, and where it went to, besides these two?'

'I can't say. I don't know much about them or their friends.'

'Do you know a young fellow named Doddridge?'

Sharp started visibly, but answered with a thoughtful look, 'Doddridge! Doddridge! I seem to know the name. Didn't he write a book?'

'Somebody else of that name wrote several. But I mean a young fellow who was out of work some six weeks ago, but is now serving in old Blincorn's shop?'

'No,' said Sharp, shaking his head, 'I don't know any such person.'

'And therefore you never paid him half a sovereign about the time this robbery was committed?'

'Rather not!'

'All right. Then I needn't ask you any more questions.'

Sharp was the last witness for the prosecution, and when he retired into the background, Leslie got up

to speak for the accused. The questions he had put to Sharp seemed to promise some good defence, so all ears were open to hear what he had to say.

'Gentlemen of the jury, who are also the judges,' he began, 'I shall not keep you long over this paltry business. The matter can soon be cleared up.'

('Oh, can it!' aside from Green.)

'First how that debt was paid off. Battersley found the coin. They had been old chums, and only fell out through Sharp, who told Baylis all manner of crams behind the other's back.'

'No, I didn't,' cried Sharp. But he was at once suppressed.

'As to the theft, my clients know nothing about it, except that when Baylis was going in at the 'Laurel Tree' on the day it took place he met Sharp coming out, who seemed very confused, and brushed past him without saying more than a word. This looked suspicious, but I have something more to say than that. Yesterday I found loitering about the playground gates a young fellow, who said he wanted the elder Sharp, who owed him money, and didn't seem inclined to pay it. At the time I hardly took in the importance of what he was saying, but this morning it seemed clear enough, so I had another talk with him in the dinner-hour, and he has confessed the whole thing. He happened to be coming out of the skittle-alley just as somebody took up the money and hurried out. That somebody was Sharp, after whom he hurried. Being in need of money himself he was easily bribed into silence; but Sharp failing to satisfy his demands, he has turned upon him.'

'It's all a cram! all a make-up!' said Sharp, indignantly. 'Are you going to take a fellow's character away on such evidence as that?'

'The evidence is good enough. It will bear being looked into. Let somebody go and ask the young fellow Doddridge, and see what he says. And I dare say Martin will remember if he was at the 'Laurel Tree' on that day.'

The sixth consulted together. Things had taken a very different turn from what they had expected; but a conclusion could not be hastily arrived at. Whilst they were consulting the audience also laid their heads together. They, too, were rapidly changing their minds, and many at once denounced Sharp as the real culprit. He, however, had one or two defenders, who found themselves outnumbered by those of the other side.

'It was Sharp; a blind man could see that.'

'No, it wasn't, any more than it was you.'

'Did you call me a thief?'

'No, I didn't, but if the cap fits —'

Then began an appeal to arms, and two or three deadly encounters of this nature were going on in different parts of the room whilst the sixth were consulting together. Bruin Grant selected the smallest pair of combatants, and began thrusting them apart, cuffing and kicking them as a little practice of his official duties. But as some of those who were looking on had often suffered by his violence, and remembered how he had been defeated once before, they threw themselves upon him, and he was quite in a bad way when two or three of the sixth ran down to restore order in the court.

At last silence was called, and Dunstan, the captain, stood up to announce the decision. It was to the effect that the matter could not be settled until the young man Doddridge had been seen and spoken to by them. Then they would try to confirm his evidence, and give judgment accordingly as soon as possible.

Then the doors were open, and everybody streamed back to the schoolroom.

Baylis and Battersley hung back to thank Leslie.

'Didn't I tell you how it would be?' said the latter.

'Yes, but you didn't say you had this evidence.'

'No, for in reality I only got it this morning. But it will be all right, and you will be clear from the smallest imputation by to-morrow.'

Before they had ended thanking him, Tosstop and Freckles returned.

'Look here,' said the former; 'I know we have behaved in a beastly way, but let us cry *par*, and shake hands.'

They did shake hands, with an amount of violence which seemed quite unnecessary, but which, no doubt, expressed the depth of their feelings. Then they went back in a happy group towards the school-room.

Just inside the door they met Clarkson, who accosted them in his quiet way.

'I say, I'm glad you two are out of this. It must have been a horrid time.'

'Oh, not so very bad,' said Battersley.

'Oh, that's all right then,' returned the other, as he sank languidly on to a form.

But there were still some who looked coldly upon them, assured by Sharp that the statement of Doddridge was false, and only made in consequence of a quarrel they had once had at the 'Laurel Tree.' Green was amongst them, and he harangued a small group of Sharp's friends to this effect.

'It's all a sell, you see if it isn't. Leslie's trying it on with us. Just as though anybody ought to believe a fellow like this Doddridge before Sharp! But the sixth will see through it; Dunstan has got his eyes in his head.'

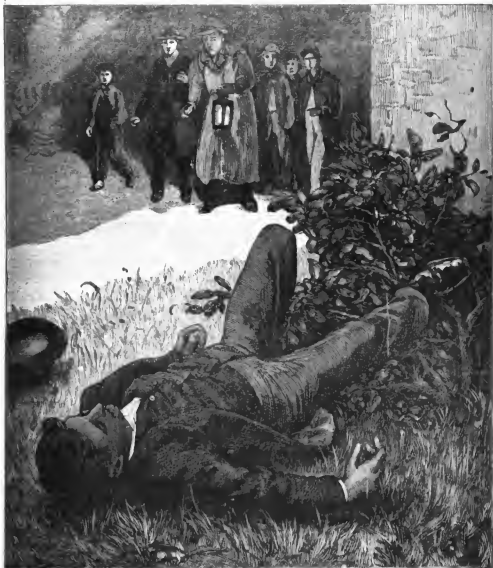
In the meantime Sharp preserved an air of injured innocence, which seemed to his friends very proper on such an occasion. Whenever he had to pass Baylis, or Battersley, or any of their warm supporters, he always elevated his nose in the air in a way that expressed his utter contempt for such persons. But they did not seem to mind it in the least. Indeed, Tosstop was heard to say that this caused Sharp to be a remarkable likeness, in miniature, to the camel. But what at last caused him to learn to cease this kind of protest was the fact that, whilst passing Battersley in the corridor as they were going up to bed, he lifted his head so exceedingly high as not to see a pail of water in the way, over which he fell, to the great entertainment of all who saw the act and its cause.

In the bedroom there were more congratulations, and words of regret for the past, and it was not until long after Chips had performed his nightly round that silence fell upon all the talkers, as one after another they went to sleep.

(Concluded in our next.)



Sharp Stealing the Money.



Sharp lying unconscious and bleeding.

THROUGH THICK AND THIN.

(Concluded from page 399.)

CHAPTER XXI.



BATTERSLEY did not sleep well that night. It seemed that he could only have been in bed a few minutes when he first awoke. But on second thoughts he knew that it must have been longer, for the moon was shining into their room, and she had not risen when they went to bed.

He lay still for a time, thinking thankfully of the recent change of attitude on the part of Tosstop and the rest since the trial had taken place. This train of thought soon brought up the image of the elder Sharp, and his eyes at once wandered in the direction of his bed.

Surely it was empty?

He looked again after rubbing his eyes. Yes, Sharp was not to be seen there.

In order to make sure, he arose and quietly made his way between the lines of sleepers until he reached Sharp's place.

His bed was indeed empty, and the clothes were gone from the foot. He looked around for the younger Sharp. He was snoring peacefully in his usual place.

Battersley sat down upon the edge of the bed for a moment to collect his thoughts. There was no reason why Sharp and all his clothes should have disappeared from the room in the middle of the night, unless he had made up his mind to run away.

Whilst he sat thinking over the situation, and wondering what he ought to do, he distinctly heard a cry, almost a scream, which seemed to come from the outside of the house at a distance from their room.

Was it imagination? He fast getting nervous, so it would be better to wake somebody up. He roused Baylis, then Tosstop, and told them his story.

'Are you sure about the cry?' asked the latter.

'Quite sure; never was more certain of anything.'

'Well, it is a queer go. I don't know what to do. If it wasn't for the scream I should say we ought to turn in again. It isn't our business to stop him cutting away if he wants to.'

'Let's wake up his brother,' suggested Baylis.

They did so. The younger Sharp was not at first grateful for being roused from sleep; but he showed signs of genuine surprise at his brother's absence, and was unable to account for it.

They looked around for any note which might have been left, but found none. By this time their movements and talk had awakened several other lads, who sat up and demanded to hear the news. Everybody on seeing how matters stood agreed that it would be best to call Mr. Wilkins; the younger Sharp in particular seemed really alarmed and anxious for this to be done. So a party of three—Tosstop, Battersley, and Sharp—went to the junior master's room, and knocked loudly.

Now Mr. Wilkins, being a man of a timid nature, was always apprehending a night attack from burglars and was therefore very cautious about answering. When they had at last assured him through the

keyhole that they did not seek either his blood or his valuables, he cautiously opened the door, and revealed himself attired in dressing-gown and trousers, and armed with a life-preserver.

'What can have brought you out of bed at this time?' he began.

'Sharp major has run away, sir,' answered Tosstop.

'Run away?'

'Yes, sir; and whilst Battersley was awake just now he heard a tremendous cry from the other side of the house.'

'A tremendous cry? Why, I believe I must have heard it myself. I certainly did hear something like one now you come to mention it.'

'Don't you think we had better look around, sir?' suggested Tosstop.

'I think we had: I'll come now.'

So the whole party set out upon their search. They knew it was unnecessary to go to the ground-floor because the doors were always carefully locked and the keys left in the possession of Mrs. Crisp. Moreover, all the windows from the ground-floor were barred from top to bottom, and escape that way would therefore be impossible. Their own floor was the second, and it was not likely that Sharp would try to lower himself from one of their windows. But some of the first-floor windows were not very far from the ground, and it was these he would be likely to attempt.

When they came down to the first-floor landing and turned down the corridor running towards that part of the school-house from which the cry had been heard, the night air blew cold on their faces, and nearly put out the small lamp Mr. Wilkins carried.

Shading the light with his hand he stopped, and looked on to the end of the corridor.

'This window is open,' he said. And without saying more they all moved on to examine it.

Mr. Wilkins handed the lamp to Tosstop and leaned out. By the bright light of the moon he saw what caused him to draw in his head at once.

'He is down below,' he said; 'we must get outside at once.'

Battersley too looked out. At a distance of about five feet was the projecting cornice of another window, from which it would not have been a very long drop to the ground. Sharp must have slipped in getting out on to this landing, for his body lay upon the ground beneath still, and not uttering a sound. They guessed the whole story at once. Fearing that further exposure that would follow on the questioning of Doddridge, and the consequences that must ensue from the story reaching Dr. Swanage, he had no doubt resolved to escape from the school, and get home at once to tell his own version of the matter first, and escape being disgraced before his school-fellows. Moreover, he knew quite well that boys' minds can generally find approval for bold acts of this kind, and in their eyes at any rate this would help to restore his character.

But he was quite unfitted for such a task, and had far better have followed the promptings of his own fears and given it up when half way through.

But, whilst we are talking thus, Mr. Wilkins and his train have been scattering through the school-

house, one to arouse Dr. Swanage, another to call Mrs. Crisp, and a third to summon Chipe from the box in which he slept.

In ten minutes the place was lit up, and anxious faces were looking one at another whilst the porter undid the door.

This over, he at once set out for Dr. Edden, who was the medical attendant of the school, whilst the rest walked around to the spot where the accident had taken place.

They found Sharp quite unconscious, and bleeding from a wound in the head, whilst one arm seemed also to have been injured. He was gently placed on a large black board in lieu of a stretcher, and carried upstairs to the school infirmary. This done, they could only wait patiently for medical aid, whilst good Mrs. Crisp bade the younger Sharp dry his tears and hope that after all it might not be so bad as they thought.

'He's dead!' cried the boy; 'I know he's dead! only you won't tell me.'

And the hearts of all softened towards the lad, as they saw that underneath natures that repel there may lie depths of tenderness unknown even perhaps to the possessor.

Mrs. Crisp was for sending the other boys back to bed at once, but they pleaded so hard to be allowed to remain until the doctor had seen the patient and said what was the matter, that Dr. Swanage at last gave his consent.

It seemed hours before Dr. Edden arrived. A very brief examination was enough to tell him what harm had been done—'Concussion of the brain.'

'He won't die, Doctor? He won't die, will he?' pleaded the younger brother.

'My boy,' said the old doctor kindly, 'these things are in the hands of God. But we will hope.'

Mrs. Crisp hurried them away to bed after this; but Sharp pleaded so hard to stay with his brother, that he was allowed to lie down in another of the infirmary beds. Then the others went back to their own room silent and sad.

'Old boy,' said Baylis, as he and Battersley sat together on one bed, 'but for you it might have been my body instead of Sharp's that they found outside. I was going straight on to that when you came back to me.'

'I never left you,' said the other simply.

'I know, I know. If you had, I should not have been sitting here to-night, and my old hateful temper would have carried me I don't know where.'

'Well, never mind about that now.'

'Yes I shall, old boy, for I might have been worse than Sharp, if you hadn't stuck to me through thick and thin.'

Sharp did not die, but for weeks he lay between life and death. His brother's selfish nature seemed wonderfully to soften and change in that time, and he spent every possible moment at the sick lad's bedside. There were no other visitors so constant there as Baylis and Battersley, and these were in the room when the patient was first allowed to talk.

In those early days he seemed scarcely to understand their conduct. He had injured them, and this was their revenge. It was an act his own feelings and

experience had not prepared him for, and he had gradually to learn its grounds.

But all suspicion wore off at last, and their visits were most eagerly looked for. Then—all too soon it seemed to him—the holidays came, and they in common with the other boys had to go home. He himself was not well enough to be removed, so the Doctor and Mrs. Crisp had him all to themselves, save when his father paid a brief visit. His mother had long been dead.

When at last Sharp was quite restored to health, Dr. Swanage felt it would be cruel to visit him with any punishment for his offence. For, indeed, the boy's character had been greatly changed, and he seemed bent on trying other paths than those which had so nearly led to his ruin and death.

It seemed a happy day when he was at last able to walk out into the playground.

'It is so jolly kind of you fellows,' he began, looking at Baylis.

'Oh, don't put it down to me,' said the latter; 'it's all Battersley's doings. I should have been nowhere if he hadn't stuck to me—'

'Through thick and thin,' added Sharp minor, with a laugh, having often heard the statement before.

'Yes,' said Baylis; 'through thick and thin.'

And then they all went arm-in-arm, slowly for the sick boy's sake, across the playground.

THE END.

THE OLD WATCH-MAKER.

FULL fifty years and more old Jacob took the shutters down,
As soon as eight o'clock had rung on all the clocks in town;

No laggard had he ever been since first he was a lad,
And got a place as errand boy, thus making mother glad.

But from an errand boy he rose to learn his master's trade;

A goldsmith good was he, and many a watch his master made;

And Jacob, he took to the work with all his heart and mind,

For never was the errand boy to idle ways inclined.

And then, as happy years went on, it came to pass that he

His master's daughter wedded, and a pretty lass was she;

But while he thus rose step by step, admired by all the town,

Our Jacob never once forgot to take the shutters down.

'Oh, master!' said the errand boy, 'that is not work for you;

I'll do it, master—folk will stare if you such things should do.'

But though he was the master now, he loved the old employ

Which always used to be his work when he was but a boy.

Fair children came to Jacob's home—a happy house had he;



"Full fifty years and more old Jacob took the shutters down."

The town was proud of Jacob, for his wealth and honesty.

His boys they grew to busy men, and to the shop they came,

But Jacob never changed his ways, his work was aye the same.

And heavy grew old Jacob's purse with silver and with gold,

And many an orphan child he sheltered from the biting cold,

He never hoarded coin away, but comforted and fed

The poor and outcast little ones, who looked to him for bread.

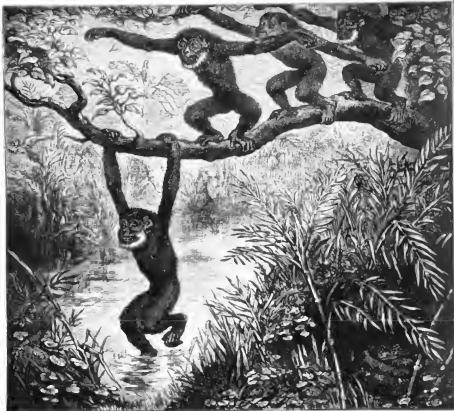
But time runs on, and Jacob grew an old man weak and frail,

But he had sons, and grandsons too, all hearty men and hail;

They loved the old man and his ways, and did not rudely frown

When the grey-haired master tottered out to take the shutters down.

At last the day drew near when Jacob's work was almost done,



Hulook going to Quench his Thirst.

He lay in bed and dimly watched the rising of the sun;
And when the cuckoo clock began to tell the hour of eight,
The old man whispered, 'Help me up, or I shall be too late!'

They gently humoured all his ways, and lifted him in bed,
But paleid was the feeble hand, confused the aged head.

He gently closed his eyes and said, 'Now, children, lay me down;
Some other, younger hand than mine, must take the shutters down.'

DAY IN INDIAN JUNGLES.

(Concluded from page 396.)

BUT presently comes a cry from the inmost recesses of the jungle, especially if near mountains, that sounds so human that a new-comer invariably stops, 'Hoo! hoo! hoo!' Then the others join in, till perhaps a full hundred of the large black apes are shouting in chorus, making the ravines resound with the

long-drawn hoop till the noise is perfectly deafening. If you wish to observe this most remarkable of all the ape tribe you must tread cautiously and quietly, and be dressed in dark clothes, for, strong and numerous as the *Hulook* (or gibbon) is, it is very shy. The best way to get a good view is to stand quite still in the shadiest place you can find if their cries tell the flock is approaching, which they do invariably on their hind legs whenever the nature of the boughs admit of so doing.

Look well at the leader as he runs along the almost horizontal branches, balancing himself by his long arms, that when hanging down reach below the knees, he also has the white beard and whiskers (but of course, like all apes, is tailless), and covered with short black hair. Quickly the rest follow him, and as they run rapidly, but lightly, over the straightest boughs, present, from their remarkable resemblance to negroes, a weird appearance in the dim forest light. The hulook seldom visits the ground and usually selects a rock near the water to drink from. Their manner of quenching thirst is peculiar; they do not, like other apes and monkeys, lie down and take a long draught, but, holding on to the rock or bough with their hands, dip their legs into the water and

then suck them, the long fur retaining enough moisture to satisfy them. The natives say, that were the hulook to lean down and drink he would be so awfully frightened at the reflection of his own face in the water that he would lose his presence of mind and tumble in; but I rather fancy that they know by instinct that such things as crocodiles and the tiger-fish lurk beneath the water, and have a wholesome dread of such bloodthirsty customers. I am sure a crocodile, or even the savage freshwater shark, as the tiger-fish is, would feel inclined to think twice ere seizing the sooty-looking hulook peering into the water, but at all events the latter should know what is best for himself.

When we are in the haunts of the hulook it may be said we have reached the densest part of the jungle, and consequently may look for signs and traces of the shyest, but not always the most timid animals. The Indian forests abound with small streams, either formed by the waterfalls from the mountains or from independent springs; all teem with fish; and no matter how high you may be above or how far inland from the sea, crabs abound. As you rustle through the brushwood on the bank water-rats scuttle from you and flop into the water, shooting through its clear depths like lightning, popping into their holes beneath the surface till all danger is past. But a heavier flop warns you that something larger than a rat is at hand, and by peering through the screen of reeds you may catch sight of otters disporting themselves. Now one will glide quickly off the bank into the stream and return with a fish in his mouth, or if he has perchance missed his aim, just pops his head up for a breath of fresh air, and down he goes again to resume the chase. If very careful to conceal yourself and to make no noise, you may see a mother playing with her kittens: a very pretty sight such is, and funny little creatures the young otters are. All have uncommonly sharp eyes and ears—and sharp teeth too, for the matter of that, as you will find out if you attempt to capture them by hand. At the first alarm the old ones raise their heads giving out the peculiar cry of 'Ooksee,' and all take to the water—the bubbles and circles on which have hardly smoothed, when the whole of the animals have disappeared, for the entrance to their burrows is far below the surface and well hidden among roots or reeds; but on placing your ear to the ground you may often detect the home of the creatures, and it is by thus finding out their whereabouts the natives of India break into the roof and capture large numbers of these animals. Continuing your walk you startle snakes, both small and large; sometimes a large beautifully marked boa constrictor will glide away from you among the brushwood; but, as frequently happens, you come upon one who has eaten too much, even to make any other movement but the wavy one caused by breathing, and in such case, he proves an easy capture if you have any fancy to take him home and make a pet of him when he has slept off the effects of his meal. Other snakes wriggle out of your way, for all these reptiles will get off if they can, and unless trodden upon, or otherwise molested, never attack people. Many of them are very beautiful: one yellow with black bands round the body; another

dark chocolate colour, covered with small scarlet and sky-blue spots; others again black and silver. The dreaded cobra is seldom seen in damp forests, and the only snake that you need to be careful of is a small viper, about a foot long, of the most brilliant green hue; he is very venomous and not easily distinguished from the grass and reeds on account of his colour: but there are risks in all wanderings in strange places, and one soon becomes aware of what to avoid. In and about the streams you are pretty certain to notice the footprints of the larger animals, as leopard and tiger, but such marks are not always certain indications of the near presence of these animals, who travel very long distances, and chiefly sleep away the hours of daylight hidden in long grass twenty feet high. If, however, you do rouse one he is almost always certain to run away, and the angry growl at being disturbed is the most alarming part of an unexpected encounter.

The morning's ramble will show you many more queer sights, and in the drier parts of India you may occasionally witness the destructive effects of a flock of locusts. These terribly mischievous insects come in flocks, so dense and numerous, that unless people have witnessed a visitation they find it difficult to realise it from a description, even if a description can convey an idea of the phenomenon. At first, a cloud appears in the distance, that looks as it approaches like the smoke from dozens of factory chimneys; as it comes nearer and nearer it assumes a dull reddish colour, and is accompanied with a rustling sound somewhat resembling the incoming tide on the sea-shore. Villagers rush from their houses, shouting, throwing up dust, and covering up what they can of their fruits and vegetables; but all precautions are of little avail, down drop the hungry visitors and soon the fields, that but a few minutes before were waving with ripening corn, rice or other grain, are densely packed with the moving mass of insects. Still they come; every tree is loaded till the smaller boughs bend beneath the clusters of the insects. Doors and windows are hastily closed; clothes, books, and everything that can be packed away is shut up in the tightest boxes at hand, for the creatures penetrate everywhere; crows, kites, and innumerable birds hover in and around the flock, and though devouring thousands make no apparent diminution in their numbers. In less than half an hour they rise to pursue their destructive journey, and then the full extent of the damage is realised. Trees that were green with all the luxuriance of tropical growth present a dead, wintry aspect—not a leaf remains; the fields are as bare as if newly ploughed, and fruit and vegetables have entirely disappeared. Hindoos weep and wail over the loss of their crops, the women beating their breasts and calling on the god 'Ram!' The more stoical Mahomedans survey the havoc and mutter about the decree of inevitable fate—Kismut. The present destruction, pitiable as it is, is not the worst of the business, for each locust has, ere she left the scene of desolation, deposited thousands of eggs, and though millions of these are collected and burnt, it is quite impossible to destroy all, and in a month or two, when the ground is again covered with verdure, the remaining eggs are hatched and a new flock of locusts is produced. O. W.

SCENES IN KHARTOUM.

COLONEL GRANT, in his records of a visit to Khartoum, gives some interesting particulars of that town and its people. Captain Speke and himself were at first very much surprised at the number and character of the shops. The best were of course found in the straight streets, and were roofed over in the Turkish style, which caused a solemn gloom within. Their contents were varied, and often of the best quality. Clothiers, bakers, fruit-dealers, and general merchants, were to be seen on all sides, and for the most part doing a good trade with the Turkish and other passers-by. In some places the surroundings became a little less busy, and men were quietly playing draughts and chess before the public, just as you and I might within the house. Here and there, too, were more violent scenes. In one case a young man and woman were found striking and tearing each other in a very savage way until the arrival of the police—as we should call them—put an end to the fight.

On entering one shop they were told by the proprietor that at times all his stock was sold out in a single day, and replaced the next. This was the more strange, because it included such very different things as Bass's ale, neckties, cigars, ready-made clothes, cheeses, and guns. Apparently, however, literature was not in great demand, for, when the visitors asked for books, they could only get a volume of domestic medicine and an English dictionary!

A. R. B.

THE REINDEER.

THE reindeer, which is by far the most important of all the various species of deer, is a native chiefly of Arctic regions, being found wild in the extreme north of Europe, Asia, and America, Spitzbergen, and Greenland. It is the only species which has been thoroughly domesticated and brought into the service of man. The reindeer is inferior in gracefulness to the stag, having rather a heavy, solid figure, with stout limbs and a quantity of long hair about the lower part of the throat. The tail is very short. Both male and female have very peculiar branching horns, which they are said to use as a means of removing the snow from the lichens which form its winter food. It also scrapes up the snow with its feet, and turns it over with its nose, which is protected by a remarkably hard skin.

To the Laplander this creature is most important, constituting, as it does, the chief part of his wealth. Many Laplanders own large herds of more than a thousand head. The flesh forms excellent food, while the milk also is much used. The skin, after being dressed, is converted into articles of clothing, and used as bedding, and in covering tents. The reindeer is also valuable as a beast of draught; harnessed to a sledge, it is capable of maintaining a speed of ten miles an hour for a long time.

The reindeer runs wild in Iceland, great herds roaming about the desolate regions in the central parts of that island. It was not found there originally, but it was introduced in 1770 by the Governor of the island, in the hope that it might be useful to the inhabitants. This expectation, however, has not

been realised, the Icelanders never having domesticated it, or turned it to any profitable account at all. Their oxen, sheep, and ponies supply all their wants, and the capabilities of the reindeer have been entirely neglected.

D. B.

A BRAVE DEED.

YOU will naturally under such a heading expect to hear some doings from the Soudan, where such brave and gallant deeds are being done by officers and men in our English army, from the great Christian hero, General Gordon, down to the brave, patient, wounded sufferers who so quietly bore their painful journey from Abu Klea to Korti. No, the brave deed to be now told took place last autumn in a London hospital, to save a little child from that deadly enemy diphtheria.

Doctors and nurses are both alike giving their skill and tender care to the little one, but the dread disease is making sure and rapid progress, and there is but one thing more to be tried to preserve life; a passage is to be opened in the throat, and a silver tube inserted through which pure air may be taken into the lungs without passing through the infected upper part of the throat. But in doing this the tube will have to be cleared by some one placing his lips to the free end and drawing through it—a work of great risk, as breath and all connected with the disease is charged with infection.

Who is willing thus to risk his life for the sake of the child's? All those around are grown people with homes and callings of their own, and with skill and knowledge which make their lives valuable to others! One is ready and willing to do it, and he steps forth and places his lips to the tube. He is quite a young man, full of life and energy, devoted to his profession, and even now an ornament to it; one who, by his uprightness and diligent use of the intellect God has given him, has earned the respect and good opinion of his fellow-men. It was a brave deed truly, in Dr. Rabbeth thus to risk his own life in saving that of another; and it proved to be more than a risk, for, though at first unharmed, in a few days the malady showed itself in full force, and the life, which had been given for the little patient, was laid down in truth and reality, together with that of the small sufferer whom he had been so willing if possible to save.

K. W.

THE OLD DRAGOON HORSE.

IN the beginning of the year 1794 a ludicrous circumstance occurred in the Castle Yard, Dublin. A farmer had, some time previously, purchased at one of the sales an old troop-horse which was unfit for service. The animal being quiet, the farmer mounted his daughter on it, and sent her to town with milk and eggs. She unluckily arrived at the Exchange just at the time of relieving guard. The horse, hearing the music to which he had been so long used, in spite of the efforts of his rider bolted into the Castle Yard with her and her milk-pails, and took its place in the ranks, to the great amusement of all present.



The Old Dragon Horse.



The Outcast Baby.

THE OUTCAST BABY.

A Story from Life.

UPON a little pallet in the children's ward she lay,
 The doctors watched her tenderly, and nurses
 night and day.
 Policemen brought her carefully—'twas just two
 nights before,
 They found her lying in the snow, outside her father's
 door.
 'And when we picked her up, and saw that wound
 upon her head,
 We thought,' said they, 'that surely she was dying
 or was dead.
 Her back is injured, that is sure, and one poor little
 arm,
 And so we brought the infant here, to save from
 further harm.'
 Her parents? Yes, they're lodged in jail; they both
 were drunk, you know;
 And so 'tis hard to say who gave the child that dread-
 ful blow.
 The neighbours heard a scuffling sound, and then they
 heard her cry,
 And some one opened wide the door, and threw her
 out to die!
 'Twas one or other of the two, but which we cannot
 tell,
 So both are lodged in prison now; sure they deserve
 it well!
 Their only child? Well, yes, she was, but all the
 neighbours think
 That such a deed they'd not have done, unless 'twas
 through 'the drink.'

She was a tender little babe, of scarcely four years
 old,
 Her wounded head was rippling o'er with curls of
 palest gold;
 But white and pinched the little face, and closed the
 sunken eye,
 And doctors came, and gently said, 'The little one
 must die.'
 The nurses strove with tender care to rouse the soul
 within,
 For never word nor cry was hers since first they
 brought her in.
 At length she moved upon her couch, and heaved a
 weary sigh,
 And then a little sob they hear, and next a baby-cry.
 The doctor comes with tender words her trouble to
 assuage;
 He tells a little fairy tale, and shows the pictured
 page.
 'She does not suffer any pain,' he says, almost in tears
 (He has a little maid at home, of just such tender
 years);
 And then they gently question her, but far too young
 is she
 To tell the story of her home in all its misery.
 She smiles into the doctor's face; she seems to love
 him well;
 But 'Daddy made me cry,' is all the infant lips can
 tell,
 And soon the weary eyelids close; again she is asleep;
 But ah! it is a slumber far too heavy and too deep.

They gently chafe her tiny limbs and bathe her
 fevered brow,
 But while they strive to keep her here Heaven's gates
 are opening now!
 And pitying angels spread their wings, and cleave the
 midnight sky,
 And in their arms the outcast babe goes to her home
 on high!
 Thank God for Children's Hospitals! and for the
 loving care,
 The skilful hands, the tender hearts, that little ones
 find there.
 When laid upon their tiny beds, the kindness that is
 given
 Must be to weary suffering babes a foretaste sweet of
 Heaven!
 D. B.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE AT
ETON.

NORTHCOTE did not long remain a Lower boy.
 He passed into the fifth form at Christmas, 1831,
 so that his experiences of fagging were very brief;
 comprising, in fact, only one full school-half. His
 contemporaries described him as having been a clever
 boy, gentle, studious, very neat in appearance, and
 never in scrapes:

'The blossom of all manly virtues made
 His boyhood beautiful.'

He was not a 'sap'—that is, an ostentatious grinder
 at books; he did all things quietly and methodically,
 being one of those admirably constituted young fellows
 who do not intrude their occupations upon others, but
 find time in plenty for play as well as work. Short-
 ness of sight prevented him from taking to cricket as
 the quieter boys used to do in those days, when wet-
 bobbing was the pastime for the faster set. In the
 summer half of 1832, Northcote began to scull pretty
 regularly on the river, and was soon noticed for the
 neatness of his oarsmanship. As he was small and of
 light build, an offer was made him to steer one of the
 long boats, which he declined; but it was predicted of
 him very early that he would become one of the best
 oars in the school, and this came to pass. In 1834 he
 entered the boats, and was placed at once in the
 'third upper,' now called 'Prince of Wales,' but then
 'Adelaide,' after the Queen Consort; in 1835 he
 rowed in the school eight, and going to Oxford, he
 pulled in the Balliol boat.

For a boy to get into 'stick-ups' before he was
 fourteen was formerly considered a great achieve-
 ment. The word 'stick-ups' came from the fact
 that there used to be three varieties of Etonian
 costume instead of two as now. At present boys
 dress according to their statures, either in jackets with
 black ties knotted sailor fashion, or in cutaway coats
 with white ties; but fifty years ago a boy discarded
 the black tie on getting into the fifth form, and if
 he was too small for 'tails' he wore a jacket with a
 stand-up collar and a white tie—not, by-the-by, the
 slim piece of cambric of these latter days, but a sub-
 stantial roll of cravat, which went twice round the
 neck, and terminated in a bow about a foot long.
 Such was the costume of Northcote when he entered

the fifth form in 1832, and found himself nearly the smallest member of that honourable company.

That year, 1832, was notable in the school annals for an attempt which was made to revive the *Eton Miscellany* which Gladstone had edited five years before. The new venture was called the *Eton College Magazine*, but it was started on the same lines as the *Miscellany*, and was equally good. The three conductors, all in Doctors' Division, were highly accomplished boys, who were to become distinguished men. The editor was John Wickens, who afterwards took a double-first at Oxford, went to the Bar, and became Vice-Chancellor. His two assistants were Thomas Phinn, a colleague; and the Hon. G. W. Lyttelton (the late Lord Lyttelton). Phinn took a first-class in classics at Oxford in 1835; became a barrister, a Q.C., Secretary to the Admiralty, and was for some time M.P. for Bath. Lyttelton was bracketed senior classic at Cambridge in 1838 with Vaughan, now Dean of Llandaff and Master of the Temple.—*Temple Bar.*

THE ORIGIN OF SOME AMERICAN NAMES.

THE names given to the various States comprising the Union have very different origins. Some are the outcome of the settlers' loyalty; such as that of Maryland, after Queen Henrietta Maria; Maine, from a place in France of which the same queen was owner; Virginia, in honour of the maiden Queen Elizabeth; and Georgia, after King George III. Some were named after other personages. Thus, New York took its title from the Duke of York and Albany, to whom the territory had been granted; Delaware, and the hey of the same name, from Lord De la War; and Louisiana, from King Louis XVI. of France. Some of the States bear native titles, such as Mississippi, which takes its title from the river of the same name; and Tennessee, which is said to mean a carved spoon. Kentucky, Missouri, and Illinois, are similarly named. A. R. B.

THE ADJUTANT.



F the numerous birds that inhabit the East none, perhaps, is more useful than the adjutant. He is certainly no beauty, but that does not matter. Standing some five feet high he stalks about on his long legs with such a military air that no wonder he has acquired the name of the officer whose movement he so closely imitates.

There is no strutting like a young military man, but a slow, deliberate gait; and his penetrating light grey eye is constantly turned in every direction. No heap of rubbish escapes him, but he does not rush towards it like other carrion birds, he seems perfectly aware that his imposing appearance is quite enough to scare away the crows, cats, and dogs that may have begun rummaging, and such

is the wholesomedread inspired by his long beak that all smaller fry keep a respectful distance.

As he bends over examining the rubbish, his black wings and tail cocked out behind, and white breast, give him the most ridiculous resemblance to a very thin-legged, long-necked gentleman with his hands behind him inspecting a book-stall. Nothing comes amiss to him; and a dead kitten or puppy is slightly crunched in his powerful beak, and gobbled down his long neck with great gusto; small matters such as dead rats and mice he makes light of, and disdains scrape and vegetables. He begins his scavenging work at daylight, and the people in the large cities, when first opening their eyes in the dim dawn, frequently find one of these huge birds perched on the open window-sill, calmly surveying them as they lie in bed. There is nothing to be alarmed at, for he has only looked in to see if you are asleep or dead; for in the latter case he would be quite able and willing to save all burial expenses.

Adjutants disappear about the beginning of winter, and, after congregating in immense flocks, fly over the snowy mountains north of India to their breeding-haunts in the uninhabited plains of Tartary, where the young are brought up. What funny-looking creatures the little undegged adjutants must be! all beak and legs I should imagine. When on their journey to and from Tartary they select an open plain to pass the night in, and when settled down have a most imposing appearance, packing themselves in a dense mass with the male birds standing shoulder to shoulder, facing outwards. If an inquisitive jackal or any other animal approaches the whole front began champing their beaks, which is quite sufficient to scare the boldest intruder; but should an animal venture too close, out will sally some dozen birds and soon drive him off. When they rise to continue their journey the rustling of the wings resembles the noise made by the sea heaving on the shore. The leader ascends in a spiral flight, followed by the rest, until the column measures a mile in height, and then away they sail with outstretched wings about twenty abreast, at such a distance above the earth that they look little bigger than crows or rooks. One flock that we roughly calculated amounted to 300,000 birds, and presented a curious sight as it disappeared through a snowy pass known to be 15,000 feet above the sea.

As the adjutant is so useful in the large towns there is a heavy fine for injuring them, but people do play tricks nevertheless, and one practical joke is to tie two dead rats together with about four yards of stout string. One bird will swallow one, and one the other, and then, as you may guess, there is a fine game of pully-haully till the string breaks and both tumble backwards together. The birds walk solemnly about the streets and never molest any one, but get out of the way with a dignified alighting motion, invariably turning round to look at one, cocking their heads on one side in a most comical manner. They again appear in the plains just before the rainy season sets in, so, in addition to their duties as scavengers, they tell us without fail that the grilling hot weather is nearly over. Half-a-dozen or so, however, never leave Calcutta all the year, and may be seen perched on and around Government House like sentries on duty. O. W.



Adjutants.

LII.